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ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

A JEW SPEAKS

by

ARMOND E. COHEN

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY · New York

1946

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Second Printing

TO
THE MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER AND FATHER

PREFACE

SOME of the chapters which follow originally appeared as open letters under anonymous authorship in the weekly bulletin of the Cleveland Jewish Center. Both Jews and Gentiles requested additional copies of the letters to circulate among their friends. The author makes no claim to any startling discoveries in dealing with Christian-Jewish relationships, but he is hopeful that the conscious attempt to speak as simply as possible may fill a genuine need.

As stated in the opening chapter, the writer does not speak as an authority on the subject, and the views represented are only his own. However he is indebted to many Jews and Gentiles for valuable suggestions and corrections. Among these are Dilworth Lupton, Unitarian minister; John Busch, Catholic layman; Ted Robinson, literary critic; Professor Max Arzt, of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America; Henry Montor, Director of the United Palestine Appeal; Dr. Alexander Kohanski, of the American Jewish Conference; Saul Stillman, life-long friend; Rabbi Jack J. Cohen, colleague and co-worker, whose correction and criticism was of major aid.

Polly Konigsberg and Ruth Kohn, through more than conscientious stenographic work and suggestion, lightened the writer's task.

Final acknowledgment must be made to my wife, Anne Lederman Cohen, who is an equal partner in the development of the idea for this book, and whose constructive criticism has been invaluable.

In conclusion, the writer wishes to state that this brief book is in itself a reply to some who maintain that the attempt to answer charges by presenting factual statements only serves to reemphasize the false charges. The writer has attempted, however, to be positive rather than defensive and has therefore presented descriptive sketches of Jewish history, religion, custom and ceremony, and internal social organization.

A.E.C.

Cleveland, April 12, 1945.

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INTRODUCTION

YOU DO NOT KNOW ME

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

I am writing these words because I am sure you do not know me. You have heard much about me. From your childhood you have vague memories about a people to be suspected. Your friends have told you dark things about me. Most Christians sometimes think they ought to fear me. Many of you may even hate me because you think I am the poisonous root of all the world's ills. But in reality, you do not know me—the Jew—who wants to tell you just exactly what I am; who still thinks that telling you my own fears, suspicions, hopes and needs, and telling you what I fear in you, and what I expect of you, could rid us both of an ancient heartache.

Not that this has not been tried before. Historians, psychologists, men of letters have written whole libraries seeking to explain the origin, philosophy and destiny of the Jew. But they have not succeeded in reaching you. The libraries are too big, the books too heavy, and they fail to deal with the caricatures you have seen of me, nor do they tell what you want to know about me.

And you may as well listen, because you cannot shut the Jew out of your mind, even though you may want to. His tortured face stared at you from the front-page of your morning paper. He ruined the radio enjoyment each night in your home when the commentators told ugly stories of

how another few thousand Jews were murdered or gassed, or buried alive. He even spoiled your Sunday afternoon when radio preachers awakened you to the danger of the international Jewish bankers, the Jewish fomenters of the Russian revolution, the Jews who were trying to control your thinking through their newspapers and their movie industry.

In short, the Jews give you a headache. But you give them a heartache. And if you have the patience to listen, possibly both of these can be cured.

Let me tell you who I am, what I want, and how I became the enigma that I am to you and the whole world. Let me speak of our economic system and tell whether I want Communism and work for it; whether I am a religious man or a godless atheist; what I think about Jesus. Let me explain why I am different from you and insist on remaining different; why I prefer my son to be a doctor or lawyer or dentist, rather than a day-laborer or factory-hand.

I shall tell you these and more. Then perhaps you will understand me.

I do not speak for the Jews whose names you see in your newspaper—I speak for none of the leaders of my people and for none whom fame or infamy has made known to you. I speak only for myself—a young, American-born Jew. To-day I am your neighbor, your professional colleague, your business acquaintance. Tomorrow my children will be either your children's fellow citizens—or their victims, depending upon whether you are willing now to learn something about me.

I

WHERE DO WE COME FROM?

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

One of the things about me that disturbs you most is that I am a mystery to you. Whenever you think of the word, "Jew," a hazy fog beclouds your mind, and your stomach begins to feel jumpy. It is the same as though you were going into a dark room and did not know exactly what to expect, having heard only that dark rooms were dangerous.

I cannot say that I blame you altogether, because you have never taken the trouble to learn much about your mysterious neighbor, the Jew. I shall tell you where I come from, as quickly as it can be told. Nothing will be withheld, and you will hear straight from the shoulder as much as I know about myself. All I know I have learned from the books, the same books that you can read in any library. The chief source is the Bible, and that you can find in your church, no matter what your denomination. Here is the story:

It was several thousand years ago that a clan known as Hebrews lived in a far-away country called Chaldea. How they got the name, "Hebrews," is a story in itself, but not very important. All the names that people had in those days would seem strange to us. The Hebrews, like all other people of that time, believed in many gods made out of sticks and stones. A man bought the statue of the particular god he adopted and kept it in his house. In this country, in the ancient city of Ur there lived a carpenter named Terah, whose

specialty was manufacturing gods. His son, named Abraham, tested the power of the idols, found they were worthless, and revolted against the religion of his time. After that, he quickly discovered it more comfortable to move to another country, as did many another rebel since then. Some historians advance another reason for his leaving Chaldea. They maintain there was an economic depression in the country, and Abraham, like other young men of that day, thought it advisable to go west to get a new start in life. Several thousand years later, Horace Greeley gave the same advice to other young men.

The neighboring land he moved to was Canaan, which is the same country as Palestine, or the Holy Land. Here he became a shepherd, prospered, and developed a large flock, moving about from one grazing territory to another, living in his tent like a sheik. It was in Canaan that Abraham made the single greatest discovery of all time—the one great God above, about and within. The Bible relates that God conversed with Abraham, promising, “Believe in me, Abraham, teach the world to believe in me, and I will keep faith with you. I will bless you and your children after you and make them a great people. This land of Canaan I give to you and your descendants forever.” Incidentally, it is *important to remember* that the Bible states God gave Canaan to Abraham and his people. Abraham’s discovery of the One God was spoken of in hushed whispers to his household about the campfire. His children transmitted the Great Truth from generation to generation.

This first Jew, Abraham, had a great-grandson, Joseph, who had gone down to Egypt, where he became an important official in the government. Some of the old accounts tell us he was the minister for agriculture there. In the course of time, when a disastrous famine paralyzed the land of Canaan,

most of the Jews followed Joseph down to Egypt. For many decades the Jews continued to dwell in Egypt on good terms with the rest of the population. But eventually a new king came along who had never heard of the patriotic services Joseph had rendered the country and who chose to ignore the varied contributions which the Jews had made to their adopted country. He decided the Hebrews were dangerous because they were foreigners and different. Thus the Hebrews were reduced to the status of slaves. The Bible informs us the Jews were persecuted more and more until finally life became utterly unbearable to them. The King of Egypt at last tried to exterminate his Jewish slaves by having every Hebrew male child drowned at birth.

When the situation reached this decisive climax, a Hebrew, named Moses, confronted Pharaoh, proclaiming that God did not want the Jews to remain slaves but directed them to go back to the old country, Canaan, and to be a free people there. Moses organized a successful revolution (just as George Washington did), and he led the Jews out of Egypt. For at least forty years they wandered in the desert between Egypt and Canaan, all the while fighting their way back home. They were attacked by many desert tribes and constantly had to defend themselves. The most significant event that occurred in the desert took place at the foot of Mt. Sinai. Here Moses gave his followers the constitution for their new country and a set of laws. That was an even more radical revolution than going out of Egypt, because the constitution said it was wrong to kill a man, even if he did not belong to one's own clan, or to steal from him, or to take his wife away. It said all men were brothers, that God was the Father of them all, and that if they wanted to obey God they had better behave decently to each other, live in peace, and share everything that God gave them. Mankind has not yet

disciplined itself to live by this ethical code. Imagine then, what a social upheaval it meant to promulgate these doctrines, when stealing, murder, hatred and daily tribal warfare were accepted and practiced as the natural and normal way of life. That constitution and set of laws is the Bible, which Christians call the Old Testament. In the Hebrew language it is known as the Torah.

The adoption of the Torah by the Jews at Sinai was of more lasting significance than their revolution against Pharaoh, because the Torah and its teachings made the Jews the people they are today. Without it, they might have become a free nation, established a government, grown powerful, and then declined and disappeared when a stronger nation conquered them. This is the history of other ancient peoples, contemporaries of the Jews. But the Torah seemed to burn itself into their hearts and souls. It made them a *religious* people. They became intoxicated and obsessed by the idea that God wanted them to change the world. They taught this to their children: keeping the Torah alive, living by it, and teaching it to others, are more important even than being a free people. It is more important than one's own life. This idea made it possible for the Jews to become in truth the "Eternal People." In their later history they were conquered many times, they were carried off as captives, they were burned at the stake, they were executed en masse—but they never surrendered. They considered it their holy duty to keep the Torah alive and to go on living. The Torah is thus the secret of Jewish survival down through the ages.

While the Jews suffered military disasters and physical privations in the desert, they finally did get to Canaan under the leadership of Joshua, who followed Moses. They lived there for centuries, first under leaders who were called

judges, and then under kings. The first king was Saul. The second king was David. His son, Solomon, followed him on the throne. Solomon, as everyone has heard, had a thousand wives, which is not the reason he is known as Solomon the Wise. Once the Queen of Sheba came to visit this king. The Ethiopians claim that when she went back, Solomon gave her a Torah for a present. In Ethiopia today there are colored Jews who speak the Hebrew language and practice the Jewish religion. They claim to be descendants of the Queen of Sheba. Though their color is dark, their features are not negroid but Semitic.

When King Solomon died, his son Rehoboam, ascended the throne. An officer in his army, Jeroboam, revolted, took ten tribes with him, and in the northern part of Palestine, founded the new kingdom of Israel. This lasted until the year 721 B.C.E., when Israel was invaded and conquered by the Assyrians. The ten tribes disappeared. There are many theories about what happened to them. Every now and then somebody claims to be descended from these ten tribes. Once the idea was put forth that the American Indians came from the ten tribes. Others have argued they went to China. But there is no evidence to confirm either of these theories. No one knows what happened to the ten tribes.

Rehoboam and the kings after him remained with the Jewish kingdom in the South. This kingdom was known as Judea. They ran a fairly good government, as governments went in those days, but they had imperialistic neighbors living in Babylonia. About five hundred years before Jesus was born, Babylonians came into Palestine, conquered the Jews, and carried them off to Babylonia.

By the way, don't permit these words, Hebrews and Jews, to confuse you. They are the same people. The southern part of Palestine was known as Judea and because that part of the

Jewish kingdom lasted longer than the northern part, which was known as Israel, the Hebrews were nicknamed Judeans, and finally Jews. They are also known as Israelites. The Jews call themselves the People of Israel, or Jews. Some of the books written by Christian authors who disliked the Jews have misled too many Christians. Just the other day, I looked into a standard dictionary and there the word "Jew" is explained as being "an usurer and an unscrupulous person." Of course that does not really tell what a Jew is. It merely indicates that the man who wrote the book did not like Jews. Now back to the story.

After the Jews had lived in Babylonia for seventy years, the Persian king, Cyrus, who conquered Babylonia, encouraged the efforts of his Jewish subjects to return to their own country to start all over again. Thousands of Israelites made the journey home to found the Second Commonwealth.

All the while the Jews lived in Palestine, both before the exile in Babylonia and afterward, they produced a considerable number of great preachers who were called prophets. You have heard their names: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, and some others. They were such inspired preachers that their sermons were written down and some people, even today, think they were the best sermons ever preached. "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and "What does the Lord ask of you but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God"—those are some of the things the great Jewish preachers urged.

During the more than five hundred years of the Second Commonwealth, the Jews in Palestine prepared themselves for the long road ahead. They had learned that political independence can be destroyed, a nation can be conquered and driven from its land. If indeed they were to carry out their eternal purpose to remain a people teaching God's will, they

had better create something to live by, far from home, in the distant centuries ahead. They made ready to be what the world had never known before and what they alone have been since—a people without a land, without a government, dispersed over the face of the earth—but a people united by religion, language, law and folk ways. These were busy years in which faith in their own eternality as a people was branded into the soul and breathed into the spirit of the national character. The Bible was compiled and put together, their hitherto oral law found permanence in writing, a popular folk literature was in the making. They would need these in days to come. But what should they do without the Temple in Jerusalem? This was their religious center from which all strength flowed. They created portable temples and called them synagogues. In the dismal future wherever Jews might be, they would form synagogues for their religious and educational needs.

These forebodings were not in vain. In the year 70 the blow fell. The invincible legions of Rome were on the march. They came to Palestine, conquered the Jewish nation, burned down the Temple, plowed up the land and sowed it with salt. The end had come. An ancient and hoary history had at last been completed—the Romans thought. But the Romans were naïvely unaware that the word can break the sword. They did not understand that faith is stronger than life. They had never seen the Jew's V weapons—a word—a book—a hope—a destiny.

It is important to note here that even while Rome expatriated the masses of Jews, some Jews hid in the hills and caves of their native land. They had to remain. They were to be the guardians of the ruins and the Return. From then till now, all through the dark ages, while Palestine was forgotten in the mind of man and lay sleeping in her dust, some

Jews have always remained in the land. They have been a token army of the spirit of Israel. The Jew was conquered. He did not surrender.

Since the time that the Romans expelled the Jews from Palestine, they have been living all over the world and have been driven from one country to another by kings and brutal dictators. For a thousand years thereafter, Babylonia was the chief center of the Jewish nation in exile. Here it gradually recovered from the shock of defeat. The exiles took out the nourishment prepared during the Second Commonwealth—Bible-Law-Literature. They opened schools and synagogues. Little colonies of Jews appeared in many distant lands. But in spirit they were united with Babylonian Jewry. From Babylon went forth the law to world Israel. Thus they remained One People under One Law, the Torah.

The Jews were always ready targets because they were foreigners and of a different religion. They were also persecuted for another reason. As soon as the Jews in any country began to make a living, the kings discovered that an efficient way to get their money was to expel them from the country and to keep all their property. Hitler perfected this method with Teuton thoroughness.

In the Tenth Century Jewish life in Babylon disappears, and at the same time it begins to prosper materially and culturally in North Africa and Spain. North Africa and Spain were Arabic lands and the proximity of Judaism to Arabic culture resulted in the Golden Era of Spanish Jewry. Influenced by his new neighbors the moral and ethical creativity of the Jew was for a while overshadowed by the achievements in science, mathematics, poetry, and medicine. But 1492 suddenly jarred the Jew out of his illusion of peace and security in Spain. Have you ever heard of the Inquisition? Look it up in any encyclopedia. Fanaticism, greed,

lust—they donned the cloak of religion and in an unholy alliance kindled the fires that cast an eerie pall over the Spanish peninsula—the Jews of Spain were burned at the stake. In the year that Columbus was sailing to a new world—from Spanish shores little boats slipped out in the night laden with trembling Israelites seeking to escape the inferno.

Some Jews arrived in Italy. Some stole across the Pyrenees. They were looking for the Jewish settlements already established along the Rhine, in France, in Holland and England. The rise and fall of Israel in Spain followed the pattern of Babylonia and was in turn repeated over and over again in every country where Jews set foot. The Jews were shuttling back and forth between the fires that engulfed them. Russia and Poland eventually became the largest centers of Jewish life. Always the Jews unpacked their baggage—Bibles—Scrolls of the Law—the Talmud, their popular literature.

Always they opened schools and organized synagogues. Faith words, prayer words, Hebrew words, these were the staff of life. Thus in the course of time, there were Jews in France, England, Germany, Russia, Poland, and in every country in the world. Not long after American colonies came to these shores, Jews from the old world began to come over here. They came for the same reason your people did—to live in a free land. They thought they would find new opportunity here, and they felt they would get along well with people who cherished freedom as much as they did.

So you see there is no mystery at all as to how the Jews became dispersed over the whole world. They were pushed around, and as soon as conditions deteriorated in one country and they were robbed and killed, they tried to escape to some other country. They did not like to move around any more than you do, but they became known as “wandering

Jews" because hostile and greedy groups continued forcing them to wander. They were easy prey to attack because they had no land of their own any more, though they always hoped that some day they could go back there to Palestine to establish the Third Commonwealth and perhaps raise up new preachers who would still find things to teach the world. At the present time there are not many Jews left in Europe because most of them have been murdered by the Nazis and the other governments that fought with the Nazis against the United Nations. In 1934 there were six and one half million Jews in Europe. By 1945 conservative estimates indicated there were one million Jews left. What happened to the others? Their ashes were found in extermination camps in Poland and Germany. Their mangled skeletons were found in mass graves. There may be slight error in the above figures. It is not easy to count ashes and bones. Some of the Jews from Europe escaped to America, England, Russia and Palestine, at most half a million.

The next time you see me, neighbor, you may feel calmer. Perhaps knowing how the Jews got all over the world and why, you may sympathize with them; you may even admire them. They have courage and determination and they have held fast to their religion despite persistent persecution. They have not become gypsies or robbers or lawless people. They have continued reading the Bible, believing in God and bringing up their children the same civilized way. They have been social, economic and cultural assets to every country they have lived in.

Now that you know where I come from and how I got here, let's hope this marks the end of mystery number one!

II

THE JEWS AND THEIR RELIGION

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

It is not surprising that you have always been confused about the Jewish religion. There are Jews who do not understand it either, as there are Christians who lack clarity about their religion. It is strange but true that while religion is one of the most important things in the world to all of us, neither Christians nor Jews have been very successful in teaching their religions to other people, and even less effective in getting them to practice it. While a man's religion should be a way of thinking and living, to most people today it is only what makes them different from others. This is about as true of Jews as it is of everyone else.

Are Jews religious? Some are and some are not, just like Christians. Some Jews pray three times every day; other Jews hardly ever pray. Most Jews believe in God, but some Jews are atheists.

Maybe what puzzles you is the different kinds of Jews and the differences in their religion. It is true we have Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Jews. But that's all. Then why should three denominations in Judaism be so confusing? It seems to me that Christian religious differences are more difficult to comprehend. To begin with, Christians are either Protestant, or Catholic, or Unitarian. Then among Catholics there are Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholics. Among Protestants, the different sects are almost endless.

Just to mention a few, there are Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Seventh Day Adventists, and many more than I can think of. But that doesn't disturb me. It is not difficult to understand that while all Christians believe in God, some believe in the Pope and others do not. Some believe Jesus was God's son, and others, like the Unitarians, cannot believe it. They think he was a very saintly man, but definitely a man, like you and me, only much better. And it is only natural that your religious customs and services should reveal the differences in your beliefs.

If a Jew can understand all this about you, perhaps Christians can just as easily learn about the different sects of the Jewish religion, which are not so numerous.

Most of the Jews in the world are Orthodox. They believe in the Divine inspiration of all the laws of the Bible and adhere to as many of them as possible. They wear hats in their synagogues and wherever they pray (even if it is only saying grace at the table), because the Talmud, their law book, says one should not go around with his head uncovered. They keep Kosher (observe dietary laws) and maintain separate sets of dishes, silverware, pots and pans. They do not eat milk and meat foods together, nor do they cook them together. Why all this fuss? Because three times the Bible says one should not seethe a kid in its mother's milk. Orthodox Jews say this means three things: One may not cook meat and dairy foods together, eat them together, or profit in any way from the mixture. This is the reason an Orthodox Jew finds it difficult to eat in his Christian neighbor's house or in a restaurant. He knows that in such places the food is not "kosher" which means it is not prepared in the way Jewish law prescribes. And even when he eats meat in his own home, it has to be bought from a kosher

butcher because then it has been killed in the way Jewish law directs.

Now, neighbor, I hope you will understand the eating habits of an Orthodox Jew and will not feel insulted if such a Jew does not permit his children to eat in your house. If you were a Catholic, your Protestant neighbor would not expect you to eat meat in his home on Friday. As a matter of fact, all people have certain religious eating habits and laws. You have Lent and we have Passover food laws. The restrictions an Orthodox Jew imposes upon himself in no way indicate a sense of superiority over others. It is only a matter of personal conviction about his moral obligation to adhere to religious law.

To get back to some other things that make Orthodox Jews different from Reform Jews, Orthodox Jews have more holidays than do Reform Jews. Most of the Jewish holidays last two days for them and only one day for Reform Jews. That distinction derives from the way they figure the Jewish calendar. But remember, the Jews are not the only people who disagree about the observance of their holidays. Christmas is not celebrated on the same day by all Christians either. The Greek Orthodox Church, for example, does not celebrate Christmas on December 25th.

I started out by saying that the main characteristic of Orthodox Jews is that they still hold fast to most of the laws of the Bible. Many of them do not shave, because the Bible says one should not pass a blade over one's face. They do not work on Saturday or light a fire in the stove or cook or ride in an automobile or street car—all because the Bible prohibits work on the Sabbath day.

Well, neighbor, I think I can just about guess your next question. Why is the Jewish Sabbath on a different day from Sunday? Sunday is the day on which early Christians held

their weekly celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. They called it the Lord's Day. These early Christians also continued to observe the Sabbath. It was not until several hundred years after Jesus' death that Christians were prohibited from observing the Sabbath. At this time, Sunday, or the Lord's Day, incorporated some of the features of the Jewish Sabbath. Here in America, we say every man has a right to practice his own religion, and if we mean that, then we must be perfectly willing to let the Jew observe his Sabbath on the day he selects, no matter what day of the week it is. And so with every religion in America.

Reform Jews are called "Reform" because they believe in reforming the laws of the Bible. This movement began in Germany as an effort to adjust the Jew to the new freedoms which emancipation from the ghetto promised. The founders of Reform Judaism believed it necessary for the Jew to give up his ancient mode of life if he were to make the most of the political and social opportunities which the new freedom offered. They declared that many of the biblical laws were meant for an earlier age and that it was no longer necessary to keep them in order to be good Jews. They practice the Jewish religion as they believe feasible in modern society. They do not observe the regulations about food. They do not wear hats in their temples. Most of their religious services are in the English language instead of in Hebrew, the language of the Bible. They have changed the calendar of the holidays and they observe them fewer days than do other Jews. Because they think it is more convenient for their people to go to religious services on Sunday, many Reform synagogues have changed their main service from Saturday to Sunday. They do not adhere to the biblical laws about not working on the Sabbath, or not shaving, but they do believe in the same God in whom all other Jews and Christians

believe, and they try in their own way to practice the Jewish religion and to advance and perpetuate Jewish group life. They have made a distinct contribution in emphasizing the desirability of decorum and aesthetic beauty in divine services.

Conservative Jews are so called because they believe in conserving as much of Jewish law as they possibly can *while still living as modern people*. Here are a few examples. In their own homes Conservative Jews keep *all* the kosher food laws about not mixing milk and meat, yet they recognize that modern people find it necessary to eat out of their own homes in restaurants. But even when they do that, they will not eat meat that is not kosher, even though they eat dairy foods in dishes that are not kept separate. They think that the place to keep the Jewish food laws is primarily in one's own home. In their synagogues, they wear hats because they see no reason to change that law, since covering the head is the traditional Jewish way of showing respect to God and it does not annoy anybody outside of the synagogue. They retain the Hebrew language as primary in their religious services but use the English language also, and their preachers speak to the people in English. They believe in sending their children to the public schools but also in providing them with a good Jewish education after school hours. They want their children to know the Hebrew language. They observe the Sabbath day on Saturday as much as possible and they celebrate the Jewish holidays the same as Orthodox Jews do.

That's about all there is to the main religious differences among Jews. But here are some things which you ought to know about the Jewish religion in general. Judaism has nothing that is analogous with the Pope or the Mother Church. Our religious leaders are called rabbis, and no rabbi

is subject to any authority higher than himself, except God. We do not have bishops or archbishops, or anything like them. In Europe, the Jews used to have a Chief Rabbi who had no authority over other rabbis, but was called the Chief because everyone recognized that he was wiser, more saintly and more learned than the other rabbis in his region. In America, we have no chief rabbis. Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Jews each have their own national organizations, and they coöperate at times in a newly formed body, called the Synagogue Council. However, the Synagogue Council has no authority to dictate to any rabbi. Some Jews feel this is a mistake and that we ought to have "central authority" for all Jewish religious groups. But most Jews think this would not be democratic. A Jew in any city may belong to any synagogue he wishes, no matter where he lives. We are not divided into parishes. Almost all synagogues are supported by annual dues which the members pay. A few Reform temples take up offerings at their services, but this fund does not go to the temples, but to various charities. Rabbis are paid annual salaries by their congregations and they pay income tax like all other citizens of the country.

In Orthodox and Conservative synagogues, one will usually find an official called the cantor. He chants the prayers at services and has special training so that he knows the age-old Jewish music. Possibly you have noticed that the Catholic mass and the cantor's singing in the Jewish synagogue are very similar. It must also be mentioned that the rabbi and cantor do not pray to God for the people; they only lead the people in prayer. Any ordinary layman in a Jewish congregation has as much right to lead the prayers as the cantor or the rabbi. In some synagogues there are no

cantors or rabbis at all, and any qualified member of the congregation leads the service.

Aside from the religious services, the other events that take place in the synagogue are meetings of the young people's groups, clubs for children and grown-ups, classes in the Jewish religion, history and language, and social affairs, especially around the holiday seasons.

If you can remember all of these things about the Jewish religion, you know all of its mysteries. It would probably do Christians and Jews incalculable good if they walked into each other's religious buildings and saw what takes place there. Possibly we would realize then that we are all brothers trying to do pretty much the same thing, and that many of our differences are not so terribly important. Many Jews would be grateful if some Christian would write a little book to tell in plain language what you know about the religious differences among Christians. When the day comes that we consider it important to learn about each other, we will no longer think of each other's religions as dark rooms of which to be afraid. We might feel closer to each other as brothers in arms waging a spiritual battle against the common foe—our inner unconquered ignorance and fears.

III

THE OLDEST INSTITUTION IN THE WORLD

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

One Saturday morning, a class of Methodist Sunday School children trooped into my synagogue, led by their teacher. They were ushered down to the front rows so they could see everything that happened in the pulpit. The children did not understand what was going on, but they had a child's curiosity and missed nothing. When the service was over they stayed, asked the rabbi a flock of questions, and explored every corner of the place. They looked into the Holy Ark, they touched every holy vessel, and all ritual articles were explained to them. From their remarks it was evident the children had learned more about us Jews than their parents would ever know. The synagogue had made understanding friends of these little Christians. That experience is what leads me to ask you to come on this visit with me.

The history of the Jewish synagogue is quite different from the story of the Church. The Church has always been a house of prayer. For music, plays, dancing, meetings, education, Christians have had theaters, town halls, the common green, the town square, schools, etc. But for hundreds of years in Europe, Jews were excluded from all such places. Their synagogues, therefore, became the center of all social, educational, as well as of religious life. Children were brought to the synagogue to learn the Hebrew A B C. Older boys came there for advanced study. Adult education took

place in the same rooms. Likewise weddings, meetings, law-suits—everything that concerned more than one private family. Now, neighbor, you can understand why there is no hushed and awesome atmosphere in a traditional Jewish synagogue. Jews have been accustomed to think of it as the center of their life where one not only prays, but where all civic business is discussed and decided. Something else you must understand. The Jews always considered themselves on intimate terms with God. They spoke to Him as one does to an intimate friend. Therefore, there is an unrestrained style in their religious service and very little of the hushed whispering and air of the mysterious which one senses in almost every church. So much by way of introduction. Now let us enter the synagogue.

It would be better if you kept your hat on, because this synagogue is Orthodox. All the worshippers wear hats or skull caps, and you would not want them to be disturbed because your head is uncovered. Almost all the men are wearing prayer shawls over their suits. These Jews cling to this ancient garment of theirs. They are praying louder than you are accustomed to in church. That is because they sing when they pray and all of them know the old prayer melodies. They do not sing together and in time, because each Jew is praying by himself and is not thinking about keeping up with his neighbor. The cantor chants the last sentence or two of a prayer and then the congregation goes ahead with the next prayer. The cantor's singing the end of a prayer is the signal for the congregation to continue with the next paragraph. Some particularly important prayers the cantor and choir sing from beginning to end, and some the cantor, choir and congregation render together. The style of praying is not exactly the same in all synagogues any more than it is in all churches.

You cannot understand the prayers because almost all of them are said in Hebrew. In an Orthodox synagogue, everyone knows how to pray in Hebrew. Several times you see everyone stand and pray in silence. This is the prayer called "Silent Devotion."

At one part of the service, everyone rises while the Holy Ark in the center of the pulpit is opened. They stand because the Holy Scrolls in the Ark are open to view and, as a mark of respect, all Jews are required to rise in the presence of the Scroll of the Law, or the Torah, as we call it.

In the Ark repose the parchment scrolls, covered with beautiful silk or velvet mantles. One is taken out, held aloft before the congregation by the Cantor who sings out in Hebrew the ancient Jewish pledge of faith in God, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One." The congregation responds with the same pledge. The rabbi, cantor and assisting laymen then march around the front of the pulpit, with the Torah leading the procession.

Together with the rest of the people, we sit down as the Scroll is placed on the reading desk. Its covering is removed, and it is unrolled. Each Sabbath it is turned to another section, until after fifty-two Sabbaths, the entire five books of Moses have been read. On Sabbaths, seven worshippers are called up to the reading desk and recite a prayer which thanks God for the blessing of His Law. Then they listen while the reader chants a few sentences of the section being read that week. At the end of this portion, the worshipper again recites a prayer, walks down and another man is called up for his turn. Laymen consider it a signal honor to be called up to the Torah.

After the seventh man has had his turn, the Scroll is held up, borne to a chair, rolled together, and dressed again in its mantles. Another smaller Scroll is then taken out of the Ark.

That is a book of the prophets, and each Sabbath after the Bible reading, a chapter is read from one of the prophets. When the ritual of reading is concluded, the procession starts again behind the scroll of the Law. This time it is replaced in the Holy Ark. The service continues. We have witnessed the colorful ritual called "The Reading of the Law," which separates the two main divisions of a Jewish synagogue service. At the end of this three-hour service, a memorial prayer for the dead is intoned during which the recent mourners rise and repeat the prayer with the rabbi.

But you want to know what we are praying. Here is a list of the main ideas of the Jewish prayer book: We thank God for having created us and having breathed His spirit into us. We thank Him for our senses of sight and touch and smell and hearing. We thank Him for the sun, moon, and stars and all of nature's beauty and bounty; for food and clothes and shelter. We pray for peace among all men, and an end to Israel's suffering and wandering homelessness. We express our happiness at being Jews who have inherited His law. We pray that we may be good and clean and strong to do God's will. We ask forgiveness for our sins. In short (though the service is not short), we seek friendship and love with God, peace and prosperity for the children of Israel and all the nations of the world. In almost every prayer we ask for God's greatest gift—peace. Remember, neighbor, to tell that to your friends when they tell you the Jews try to stir up wars!

As in your services you remember John and Matthew and Mark—the founders of your religion—we recall the lessons taught by Moses, Isaiah, Amos and Rabbi Akiba.

Now what about the physical differences between my Synagogue and your Church? Of course you have not seen any religious pictures or paintings of saints or patriarchs

here. Even the stained glass windows never display the figure of a human being. The Jews were so strenuously opposed to worshipping a human being that they stopped putting the image of any human in the synagogue, not even of Moses, Joshua or any prophet, saint or rabbi. Our sages said Moses disappeared on the mountain. No man ever knew his grave, so that no one would ever be tempted to worship him. We pray to God alone. That is our religion. There are other Jewish symbols in the synagogue—the six-pointed star of David, the Ten Commandments, the signs of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, the Lion of Judah—but never a human face or figure.

Every visitor to a synagogue or temple is attracted to the flickering oil lamp hanging over the Holy Ark. You will find it in every Jewish synagogue or temple, whatever its denomination. The origin is a commandment in the Bible to “take pure olive oil, beaten for light, to put up a perpetual lamp.” To us Jews it means that God’s faithfulness and love never disappear, that the light of hope and faith are eternal, that Israel may flicker, seem frail and weak, but will never die as a nation. Millions of Jews, during thousands of dark years, have sat before that little light and regained their faith and hope—that some day all would be well again and we would all be brothers and live in peace. The light is still flickering and we still have faith—in God, in ourselves, and in you.

Before the last anthem is sung and we end what may be your first and last visit to a Jewish synagogue, look carefully at the prayer-book. You see, it is much bulkier than yours. There is quite a story behind that. Next to the Bible, this prayer-book is the Jew’s most treasured and sacred possession. It is filled with history, poetry, philosophy, legend and laws. If you know when each prayer was written, why, and by whom, you know the history of the Jewish

people and her heroes, poets, philosophers, and martyrs. The prayer-book has hardly ever received a going-over and has been revised only two or three times in our entire history. At critical moments in the Jewish past, a great leader wrote a prayer. If it proved itself worthy enough to be remembered, it went into the prayer-book and there it stayed forever. No one who came afterward ever thought he had a right to remove it, for it had become a prayer of the whole Jewish people. Sometimes we skip over some of the prayers, but we leave them there for reference. That is how our prayer-book grew up and became so big.

In recent times, when many Jews no longer learned the Hebrew language, English, French, or German translations were printed alongside the Hebrew, and that has made our book just twice as large as it should be. Some of us think it is sad for Jews not to know their original mother tongue.

The Reform temples have a different prayer-book. A good many years ago they took this ancient classic, revised and abbreviated it, and printed a new and smaller edition. It has very little Hebrew in it, and not many of the old prayers. Only a small part of the Jewish people has adopted the Reform prayer-book. Religiously, Jews are very conservative and they cherish the ancient prayer-book.

That old man across the aisle dropped his book in putting it away. He has picked it up now and kissed it. You wonder why a Jew kisses his prayer-book.

He is kissing the tears of all the generations who went before him. His mother's tears fell on those pages when she first read it as he sat in her lap. She was praying that her little boy would not have to suffer as most Jews have for clinging to that Hebrew prayer-book. The tears of every generation have sanctified the book. Jews clutched it when the ancient Romans threw them to wild beasts. Jews held it to their lips

when they were burned at the stake in medieval Europe. Jews saw its pages licked by the flames as they perished with their prayer-books when the pogromchiks of Russia locked them in their synagogues and put them to the torch.

And more than tears makes the book holy. Israel's hope for the future is there. In that book Israel's heart and soul sing of the day when the mountains will skip like rams, when nations will turn their swords into plowshares, when the sweetness and kindness of the little child will lead us all together to a better world.

That is the Jewish prayer-book, neighbor. When I kiss it, I salute the nobility of my people's character.

IV

DON'T BLAME JESUS

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

I promised, at the start of this intimate conversation, that I would not refrain from speaking of those things about which we are most sensitive. Candor, therefore, compels me to introduce the painful subject which is at the very heart of the problem of friendship or enmity between Christians and Jews, and has been the core of that problem down through the bloody centuries. Looking back through the history books written by both your historians and mine, it seems so hard to believe that in the name of one whom tradition says was the gentlest man who ever lived, millions of people have been burned at the stake, crucified, hacked to pieces. You probably have surmised that the subject I want to talk about is Jesus. The extent to which Jesus influences the relationship between Jews and Christians may be illustrated by the following story.

Not long ago I was asked to talk before a group of Christian young people, to explain some of the things the Jews believe in their religion. The young folks were polite and seemed sympathetic as I revealed to them what we Jews think about God, brotherhood, justice, peace, the Negroes, economic democracy, etc. In the discussion that followed, one young person after another arose to say, "We are indeed glad you came to explain these things because there is really nothing in your religion which should keep us far apart." I

was beginning to feel that perhaps all we have to do is to explain our religions to each other in order to solve the age-old Christian-Jewish problem. But just then the minister came up to thank me for my talk. I had known this minister for many years as one of the liberal men in our city. On many occasions he had been a defender of the rights of Negroes. He had great sympathy for the working man. He was generally regarded by everyone as a clear thinker. The minister looked troubled as he said to me: "As you were talking, I was thinking how foolish it is for Christians and Jews to hate each other. We can get rid of this whole mess of anti-Semitism and Jew-hatred if only your people would accept Jesus Christ. Why in the world are the Jews so stubborn about this?" It never occurred to the minister that maybe he was being stubborn.

I went home with a few question marks in my mind. First, does the minister himself realize that Jesus is at the center of Christianity, and that asking Jews to accept Jesus is asking them to accept Christianity? Jesus is not just an important figure in Christian religious history. He is the founder and prototype of the religion. Secondly, why did the minister ask the question which never occurred to the young folks? In other words, to what extent is the Christian clergy itself responsible for erecting insurmountable barriers to better Christian-Jewish relationship? The young people did not make their offer of friendship conditional. The clergyman made it depend on the Jews renouncing their own religion.

Now let me try to explain just how we feel about Jesus, then you can decide whether it is simply downright stubbornness, or whether we have a right to think as we do and still feel justified in expecting understanding and friendship from Christians.

History tells us that Jesus was a Palestinian Jew who lived

several thousand years ago. He was a preacher of saintly character who became famous in the cities and hamlets of Palestine because of his gentleness and love for the down-trodden. Unlike the leading clergy of all faiths, he spent most of his time in the company of the poor, the openly sinful, and all those who were generally regarded as the disreputable people of the community. Your Bible, the New Testament, confirms these facts about Jesus' life. As for his personal habits, it is important for you Christians, and for us Jews as well, to realize that in personal appearance and conduct, Jesus was very much like the bearded Orthodox rabbi formerly found in Poland or on the East Side of New York. At first he was careful to observe all the laws of the Bible. He did not work or ride on the Sabbath day. He ate only kosher food. He washed before eating and recited grace. He prayed three times a day at the traditional Jewish services and every morning bound the phylacteries on his arm. Of course he did not shave. He was an Orthodox Jew. If he were to reappear suddenly in New York City and walk into a church, he would feel like a stranger in a foreign land. The service of church or cathedral would be unfamiliar to him. The language would, of course, be unknown to him. The dress and shaven faces of the men would appear brazen. If he went out and walked into a Reform Jewish Temple, he would think the Jews had done very strange things indeed to their religion. To be sure, the occasional prayers in Hebrew he would understand, but it would be difficult for Jesus to fathom the reasons for bareheaded Jewish worshippers, music by non-Jewish composers, gentile singers in the choir, or the passing of the collection plate on the Sabbath. In perplexity, Jesus might ask the way to an Orthodox synagogue. Here among bearded Jews who prayed only in Hebrew, garbed in ancient prayer shawls, he would at last feel some-

what at home. Some people whose blood pressure rises at the sight of a bearded Jew in old-world garb, would do much for their health and emotional stability if they pondered on the foregoing thrice daily.

Jesus lived during the period immediately before and after the year one, as time is now counted. Palestine was under the political government of the Romans, who were pagans. The Jews still had a vestige of power, but were on their last legs as a nation. Roman legions had occupied the country, and the Roman Pontius Pilate governed with a brutal hand. Jewish courts still functioned, but their decisions were subject to Roman approval. The power of capital punishment had been taken from Jewish courts.

Anyone can readily understand that Jesus, leader of the masses of the poor, was carefully watched by the Romans. They regarded him and his strange teachings as a potential rallying point for rebellion. To say, "The meek shall inherit the earth," as Jesus did, was the equivalent of saying, "The aggressive invaders shall be destroyed." These are words of rebellion. It was therefore to the interest of Pontius Pilate to put Jesus out of the way, and if possible, to thrust the blame on someone else.

As far as the Jews were concerned, Jesus became popular among them at first. They had no reason to suspect him, for like all other preachers of the time, he kept the Sabbath, ate only kosher food, and prayed three times a day. Each Sabbath he appeared in some synagogue to preach. His genuine love for all people and his saintliness of character attracted more and more followers. But in the course of his development Jesus began to say things that gave concern to many Jews. He said he was the son of God. The Jews believed they were all sons and daughters of God. But Jesus seemed to imply he was the son of God in a way altogether different

from other Jews and all other men. This the masses of Jews were unable to accept. They rejected the doctrine that they could be saved by believing in him as the son of God.

The Roman Pilate bided his time for an opportunity to destroy Jesus. Agreeing with him was a group of Jewish quislings. They cared little for the independence of Judea. They were content to retain their upper-class position by fawning upon the Roman invaders. The masses of the Jews were indifferent by this time. They did not follow Jesus, but they had neither desire nor cause to remove him. Those whose power he threatened, Pilate and his henchmen, were responsible for his indictment and ultimate execution. For the record it must again be stated that no authoritative Jewish body *could* have executed him. The Jews no longer had the power of capital punishment. Their courts did not convene on Friday afternoons preceding the Sabbath, the time when Jesus was tried. The outstanding Christian scholars, writing on Jesus, have substantiated Jewish innocence over and over again. The Jews were not Christ-killers. They were Christ-givers. The former falsehood has been perpetuated. The latter truth has been deliberately ignored and stifled.

Though Jesus was removed from the scene, his spirit and influence became immortal and conquered the hearts of men all over the world. While the Jews continued to believe in their own religion, the followers of Jesus built a great church about his memory and sermons. Since that distant time, there has been hardly a country where Jews have not been murdered and tortured because they could not accept Jesus as their saviour. Sometimes fanatics committed the murders because they believed that by slitting the throats of Jews they were avenging the crucifixion of Jesus. They thought Jesus would love them and save them for such acts of

"gentleness" and "love." More often, unscrupulous kings and clergy despoiled Jews by crying, "in the name of Jesus," in order to hide their real purposes of greed, lust and robbery. In the Middle Ages, for protection, Jews often voluntarily became the property of such rulers and clergy. They were bought and sold in the open market, with a definite commodity value.

Is it any wonder the mention of "Jesus" still terrifies many Jews? The centuries of suffering have done this. "Jesus" has come to mean to many Jews "hide!" "beware!" "run for your life!" "here goes your hard earned living," "say good-bye to your children." This is the reaction of large numbers of European Jews. The Jews of America, thank God, have had no reason to feel this way. Christianity has sometimes meant discrimination, unfairness, unfriendliness, but not physical persecution.

Although the name of Christ does not frighten Jews in the western world, Christians must reconcile themselves now to the fact that American Jews do not accept Jesus any more than their European forefathers did. The most liberal among them feel "he was a fine and saintly preacher, a great teacher." Some Jews, but only a small minority, even think he was a great prophet like Isaiah or Jeremiah. Occasionally a rabbi has found the enthusiasm to say, "Jesus was the greatest of the prophets." The latter statement invariably meets widespread repudiation by Jews.

It seems to me that the Unitarians in the Christian Church feel pretty much the same way about Jesus as do many Jews. They refuse to accept him as the son of God. They refuse to accept the Trinity. Yet Protestants and Catholics do not persecute Unitarians, or discriminate against them. Then why do they persecute Jews on account of Jesus? You may have your own answer. Here is mine: Christian children are

still taught the fallacy, "The Jews killed Jesus." No one likes a killer. As children grow up, armed with a religious defense and justification, they find it economically advantageous, professionally profitable, and generally self-inflating to go on hating Jews. This is illustrated by a story recently told. The Smiths had lived next door to the Cohens for a number of years. Their small children were good friends. One Monday morning, Mrs. Smith appeared at the Cohen doorway, bluntly and angrily addressing Mrs. Cohen with: "My Johnny cannot play with your Samuel any more. Please don't send your child over to my house!" "Why not, what's happened?" asked Mrs. Cohen. "Well," answered the neighbor, "the Jews killed Jesus." "But," pleaded Mrs. Cohen, "I don't think the Jews really killed Jesus, and even if some Jewish officials did, that was several thousand years ago." "That may be," the unconvinced Mrs. Smith replied, "but I just heard about it!"

And so with many other Christians, whenever they hear about "it," they become haters of Jews; another link of evil and strife is forged in the chain of Christian-Jewish enmity that has encircled the world through almost two thousand years. Isn't it time to break the chain and free the world for love, friendship and coöperation, and for true Christian and Jewish living? What do you think Jesus would have to say about this? The only way to create understanding on this crucial question is for Christians to make up their minds that Jews will continue to believe in their own religious principles and have a right to. As for the attempt of clergy and missionaries to persuade Jews to believe in Jesus as the Saviour, unrestrained candor again compels the bold statement, it is a waste of time and effort inevitably resulting in vexed frustration. There is no likelihood of the majority of Jews ever becoming Christians. Do not misunderstand this.

Christians have a perfect right to try to convince Jews, provided they are gentle in the way they do it and do not get violent. The mind may respond to reason; it is only crushed by a club.

Two thousand years of bloody history ought to convince all reasonable people that no man is ever converted by torturing him or murdering his children. The Founding Fathers of America separated the government from the Church because they wanted to prevent anyone's forcing his religion on someone else. No intelligent Christian should ever permit himself to think or say again, as the minister did, "Everything would be all right between you Jews and us Christians, if only you would give up your stubbornness about Jesus." That is as though the Jew said, "I like you, my Christian neighbor, except for the fact that you are not a member of my synagogue." Why should he expect you to be? You have a right to believe in anything you want to and you have a right to expect me to respect you so long as you are a decent fellow and a good neighbor. So let each of us go on believing the way we do. Let us remember that America was started so that all of us would have the freedom to do just that without any interference. Don't let Jesus stand between our being good friends; that is the last thing he would have wanted.

V

AM I AN INTERNATIONAL PLOTTER?

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

So far you have heard about my history, religion, and the way I worship. I have tried to speak plainly about a root-problem between us, Jesus. And yet I know that even if all these are at last clear to you beyond any misunderstanding, you still retain in the back of your mind certain fears and suspicions about me which have not yet been cleared up. These are what I should like to bring out into the light. Let us talk about the gossip and rumors of which I and my brother-Jews have been victims for a long time.

Every anti-Semite (professional or confirmed Jew-hater), goes to great trouble to picture the Jews as international plotters, schemers and revolutionaries who are perpetually planning to overthrow governments. They publish newspapers, books, magazines, and circulate pamphlets in which they tell lies about Jews having the most important jobs in all the governments of the world. Every time Franklin Roosevelt ran for reelection, leaflets were circulated in which he was called "Rosenfeld." Perhaps you have seen some of the fancy charts which have Rosenfeld on top and under him other Jewish names at the head of government agencies. When the Jew, Sidney Hillman, organized labor to support Roosevelt, the anti-Semites and even some newspapers pointed the accusing finger as if to say, "See, there it is, no use denying it any longer." No one took the trouble to

find out that Hillman considers himself a Jew only by birth. He has in no way distinguished himself in his association with either the Jewish religion, Zionism, Jewish charities, or anything else that is specifically Jewish. No one made the equally false charge, "Catholics are running the government," since many labor leaders in the country are Catholic.

In order to prove the Jew to be an international plotter, the anti-Semites try to show first that the Russian government is dominated by Jews. Their purpose and reasoning here are obvious. "The Soviet government came into power by overthrowing the czar. This Communistic government seeks to destroy all other governments. Therefore, if the Jew can be made to appear the chief influence in the Russian government, he automatically becomes the plotter against all other governments." The main objective of the anti-Semite is to show the Jew dominating all governments. Therefore, when the British finally stood up to the Germans, the stories circulated that the British government was in the hands of Jews. This tying-up of Jews with governments is one of the oldest tricks employed against us. It started out a good many years ago with the circulation all over the world of a document, "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." That document, which is a forgery (and leading Christian experts have many times proved it to be so), says that the "elders of Zion" met one dark night in a cemetery in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and there hatched a plan for destroying all the governments in all the nations and for setting up Jewish governments. In America, Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent* published the same falsehoods until Mr. Ford signed a statement in which he said he realized it was all a terrible mistake and did not want to have anything more to do with it. Mr. Ford belatedly admitted his mistake, but of course that did not undo all the lasting harm, for some foolish

people believe anything they read in print no matter who does the printing.

It is an old truth that you can never catch up with a lie and Jews have never been able to convince weak minds that stories about their being international plotters and schemers are just fairy tales. In recent years it has been discovered that Hitler's real "fifth column" consisted of the anti-Semites in every country that Hitler expected to conquer. He ordered his henchmen (generally traitorous citizens) to stir up hatred against the Jews and to revive the old myths about their being plotters and schemers. In doing this the attention of the people of each country was centered on the Jews and that served to divert their attention from the Hitlerites in their midst who were preparing plans for Hitler's invasion. The British and American governments quickly discovered the technique, and every time they heard anti-Semites in their countries screeching about the Jews, they knew where to look for the traitors who were building up a machine for Hitler.

Before the First World War, when the czar of Russia felt his throne was shaky (because the people were tired of the tyranny and poverty of that country under his corrupt administration), and the rising rumble of revolution reached the danger point, he pulled the old trick out of the bag. Millions of copies of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" were circulated in Russia. For a while, the trick was successful. The people began to persecute the Jews and forgot that their own czar and his court were responsible for the misery of the Russian people. But eventually they realized that their royal oppressor had circulated the protocols to blind the people of Russia to the root source of their trouble, the rapacious and ruthless czarist regime. Some time later they understood that the reviving of the ancient Jew-hatred is always the enemy's

way of stopping the march of progress. (The Communists eventually made anti-Semitism a crime in Russia, because they correctly regard it as a counter-revolutionary betrayal of their government and country). Finally the Russians opened their eyes and saw that the protocols were a fake. They went after the czar in earnest and threw off the ancient yoke of monarchy. Of course, there were Jews in the revolutionary movement in Russia (just as there were Jews who remained loyal to the czar and fought against the revolutionaries), but they were a small minority because the Jews were and are a very small minority of the total Russian population. Lenin, who led the revolution, was not a Jew and neither is Joseph Stalin. Very few commissars in the Russian government are Jews. When the revolution finally triumphed, the synagogues of Russia were closed and many of the rabbis and religious leaders were arrested because it was felt they, like other religious functionaries, had been opposed to the revolution. You will agree that if they had started the revolution, they would be at the top of the government and not in jail. The Russian government is no more Jewish than is the government of the United States Jewish, simply because one cabinet member is a Jew, nor the government of Great Britain because every now and then a Jew gets into the cabinet there. The attempt to identify Jews as the ones who control the government is merely a way of stirring up suspicion about the Jew.

But you ought to know something about how the Jews *are* organized and what they try to do in these organizations to help themselves. Here is the plain story, and after you know it, you will probably conclude that they ought to be even better organized than they are in order to aid the Jews of Europe and even to improve their status in America and other lands.

What truth is there in the oft-repeated charge that the Jews have an international organization or an invisible government? You can answer the question for yourself on the basis of the facts. Here they are: The Jews do have four important international organizations. The largest of these is called B'nai B'rith, which means Sons of the Covenant. B'nai B'rith is a fraternal organization over a hundred years old. It was founded in New York City and its purpose was, and still is, to foster a sense of brotherhood and fellowship among Jews all over the world. B'nai B'rith says that because Jews are divided into Orthodox, Reform and Conservative denominations, into secularists, religionists, Yiddishists, Hebraists, industrialists, laborers, and so forth, it is necessary and desirable to have one unifying organization where Jews meet as brothers and minimize the differences among them. Every large city in America has a lodge affiliated with the national B'nai B'rith organization. Before the war, most of the large European cities had their B'nai B'rith lodges.

What does the B'nai B'rith organization do? It builds hospitals to take care of its members and others when they become ill, and thus relieves the general hospitals which are overcrowded. B'nai B'rith has established orphanages where it takes care of unfortunate Jewish children, and thus removes this responsibility from general orphanages. One of the most important activities of this Jewish fraternal organization is its anti-defamation work, carried on through its Anti-Defamation League. It seeks to protect Jews from slander, libel, vicious rumors and gossip. It tracks down the false stories and tells the truth about Jews. It coöperates with other American agencies to improve race relations. Vocational guidance has been an aspect of B'nai B'rith activity. It administers aptitude tests and guides young Jewish people into the proper professions and trades. Some Jews do not agree

with this program because they feel that a young Jew ought to decide for himself what life work he wants to engage in, but B'nai B'rith believes that our young people need guidance for their own welfare.

While every Jew has a right to belong to whatever religious denomination he chooses, the B'nai B'rith believes that the coming together of Jews of various denominations creates a stronger feeling of brotherhood and fellowship. It is very much like the Masonic Order, except that the B'nai B'rith is not a secret order, and its meetings are open. The members of B'nai B'rith promote patriotism and the government of the United States has frequently praised them for their outstanding work in purchasing and selling bonds. In recent years, this international Jewish fraternal order has become interested in aiding the Jews of Palestine. It has contributed substantial sums of money to plant forests in that country and to help Jewish settlers establish themselves on the soil.

One of the most significant undertakings of B'nai B'rith is its youth work, carried on through the AZA organization, Junior B'nai B'rith. The leading educators of America have recognized AZA as one of the most wholesome youth organizations in the country, dedicated to character building and inspiring the Jewish young with high ideals of personal conduct. On every large university campus, and on many small ones, there are found Hillel Houses, established and supported by B'nai B'rith. These are religious and social centers for Jewish college students. Here an effort is made to continue religious training and to provide healthful and wholesome recreation for our young people. Can anyone object to this, or do you agree it helps to develop good American citizens? Catholics have Newman Leagues and Centers. Protestants also keep an eye on their young folks during the

college years. All of us realize that if churches and synagogues lose their young people during their college days, they are lost forever.

Does B'nai B'rith help to build democracy? The best answer has come in the Nazi countries. There B'nai B'rith organizations have been outlawed and their offices smashed. Apparently the Nazis classed the B'nai B'rith with other democratic institutions.

Another international Jewish organization is the Joint Distribution Committee, usually called by its initials, JDC. JDC was founded in New York City during the First World War. Its purpose was to give relief to the starving Jews of Europe, to establish trade schools where Jewish boys and girls in Europe might be taught how to earn a living with their hands. It has offices and agents throughout the world, working to improve the lot of oppressed Jews, and it has raised large sums of money, chiefly from the Jews of the United States. It is another attempt of the Jews to care for their own. If it were not for the JDC, tens of thousands of Jews would have starved to death. For its efficiency, economy of operation, and constructive work, the JDC has been honored and recognized by all the free governments of the world. In every foreign disaster, it works hand in hand with the Red Cross.

Still another international Jewish organization is the World Zionist Organization. It was founded in 1897 by Theodore Herzl. Its purpose from the beginning has been to reestablish a Jewish State in Palestine. It organized the World Zionist Congress which, before the war, met every two years and was attended by leading Jews from all countries who believed in creating a Jewish national home in Palestine. Since its founding, the W.Z.O. has been responsible for bringing more than half a million Jews to the Jewish homeland. The World Zionist Organization, through its branches, the Jew-

ish National Fund and the Palestine Foundation Fund, has spent millions of dollars given by Jews, to make of desolate Palestine a great agricultural and industrial center which has benefitted the Arab population and the entire Near East. Palestinian Jewish industry was the chief supply source in the Middle East for the United Nations.

There are many Jews in the world who believe that Palestine ought to become a religious and cultural center for Jews, but not an independent Jewish state. These have joined together with the World Zionist Organization in the Jewish Agency. The Agency is the official body recognized by the League of Nations when the League gave England the temporary responsibility of governing Palestine. The Jewish Agency therefore represents the Jews of the world in all dealings regarding Palestine between the League of Nations and the British government. Leader of the Zionists of the world is Dr. Chaim Weizman, a British citizen many times honored by the British government for his services to that country. He invented a process that accelerates the making of large quantities of explosives economically. Through this invention, he greatly aided the Allies in winning the First World War. He has made his contribution in World War II also. One of his sons, a pilot in the Royal Air Force, went down over France.

The fourth world-wide organization is the World Jewish Congress. The World Jewish Congress is the parent body of Jewish Congresses in most of the countries of the world, including the United States. The respective national congresses are elected by popular vote and therefore justly claim to be the most democratic and representative bodies of the Jewish people. The World Jewish Congress makes the same claim. It is the guardian of Jewish rights and status everywhere. It maintains a permanent staff of economic, political, and cul-

tural experts who study Jewish security in all lands, civic rights, immigration, and kindred problems. It is the first to intercede on behalf of oppressed or disfranchised Jews anywhere in the world.

That is all there is to the types of international Jewish organizations. Not only are they not secret, but they take great pains to publicize their work because they are confident that many good Christians would support them if they knew the truth about the work they engage in. All these organizations are strictly non-political as far as the internal affairs of any country are concerned. The Zionist Organization of England has among its membership Laborites, Conservatives, and Liberals, depending largely on each Zionist's own economic status. The Zionist Organization of America has in its membership Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, capitalists, trade-unionists and a great many middle-class tradesmen, as well as professionals. It does not take part in American political campaigns and has no need to. Every President of the United States since Woodrow Wilson has expressed his approval and support of Zionist work. (In the 1944 national election in the United States, both major parties and candidates endorsed Zionist aims and purposes.)

The same holds true about the Joint Distribution Committee and the B'nai B'rith. They are interested in justice and humanitarianism to the Jewish people and to everyone else, Negro as well as white.

This is the whole truth about Jewish internationalism, as we Jews know it. We are international because there are Jews in every nation and we are interested in their welfare. We are international because we think brotherhood and justice and peace are also international, and the Jewish people lives to foster these great ideals. Jews are international just as Christians are international. Are we plotters and schemers?

Yes, in the sense that we pray and work for the time when tyranny, prejudice, and poverty shall be destroyed in every corner of the world; when the Kingdom of God and the Society of Man shall be established, under which all people may live a free and happy life. We consider ourselves responsible for the welfare of all people in all lands. So do good Christians.

The only ones who can object to this kind of Jewish internationalism are such as seek to perpetuate tyranny, inequality, and poverty. They are right in regarding Jews as their unyielding enemies.

VI

I AM A CAPITALIST AND A COMMUNIST

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

Another rumor which has victimized the Jew pertains to his position in the business world. Sometimes the gossips damn him for being a Communist. Through the other ear he hears himself accused of being a capitalist and owning America. Let me talk about myself and my economic views.

Does it sound silly for a Jew to say, "I am both a Communist and a capitalist?" Perhaps it does, but that is exactly what some Christians constantly charge me with being, and strangely enough, in a measure, they are right. Listen carefully and you will hear some Jew say, "I am a capitalist who wants to preserve the capitalistic way of economic life because it will give me the things that I want—maybe. If I own my business, and have ten, twenty-five, fifty thousand dollars or more, I want to keep this and be sure it is safe. I made it by my own hard work and my own ideas. Anyone else who wants to work as hard as I did can do the same. This is a country with plenty of opportunity for everyone. My money is invested and is working for me. The capitalistic system was good for me; it can be good for everybody else. I do not want anyone tampering with it. Socialists, Communists and the others are just so many crackpots who want to make a living without working. They want the government to support them. But who will make the money to pay taxes? They cannot answer that one."

Or maybe I am a different kind of capitalist. I am starting out in the business world; I get a job in a store as a salesman and try to save up a few dollars. Possibly in a few years I will have enough to buy a store or to start some little two-by-four manufacturing business. I shall either make goods or sell them. I am willing to work hard for long hours, and if I use my brain, I may produce some clever new ideas. Before you come to the wrong conclusion, let me explain that by "clever" I mean legitimate, smart business ideas; not shady, sharp-shooting tricks. Yes, I know some Jews are not on the level, just like some Christians, and I do not defend Jewish rogues any more than Christian rogues. But our percentage of them certainly is no greater than is that of any other religious group. During the war years, you probably became irritated and had a right to, when you saw in the paper that someone, named Goldstein or Cohen, was indicted for violating the price ceilings, avoiding the income tax or acting in other unpatriotic ways. You may be sure that I felt worse than you did about it. But whenever you are tempted to say, "These Jews—" just remember how often you saw the same reports about the McCarthys, the Smiths, the Adamses, and others with definitely Christian names. No religious group has a monopoly on schemers who try to beat the law. Most of us, like most of you, are honest, patriotic citizens; but we, like you, have our proportionate share of black sheep.

I was saying before that last digression—with hard work and good business sense, I think I can make some money. I shall either invest that money in my own business and make it bigger, or I shall invest it in some other way and put it to work for me. With a decent break, I can become financially independent in a few years. I can be my own boss. There is no limit to what I can accomplish in America. Capitalism

gives me the go ahead sign. It all depends on me and I am willing to take the chance. With war-time restrictions lifted, I am going to use some of that money to buy a new car, not a cheap one, but one with power and elegance. When you see me go by in the new automobile, will you say that I am ostentatious, and a show-off? Let me ask you, don't you buy a good car when you can, and don't your friends do the same? Why is there no complaint when Christian friends drive by your home? Is it because my car may be red and your friends' blue or black? Is there any reason why we have to like the same colors or why you should be contemptuous of me because I may like brighter colors?

When you see me in that new car and thoughtlessly say, "Those Jews all have money," as though I did not have a right to work hard to earn it and to buy what I want with it, will you forget that across the railroad tracks there are Jews who do not have cars and some of them do not always have carfare either? Many of them are poor because some of your friends will not give a Jew a job. It would be well to remember also that it is the very biggest companies like the banks, telephone, electric, and gas companies, that will not let a Jew have a job in their firms.

Do not misunderstand me, I do not mean that is the only reason a great many Jews are poor and down and out. Remember, I still believe in capitalism in the good old U.S.A., and if a man has what it takes, he can get there. But some of our Jews, like some of you, are not built for a stream-lined business world. They do not have what it takes even though they may be very good people. When hard times come around, they go on charity or relief. This last thing troubles you no end. Why should your tax money go to Jews on relief? Why don't the Jews take care of their own? I, too, pay taxes and I do not say, "I don't want a single Christian on

relief to get any of my money." My idea of American democracy tells me that in the matter of helping the poor, I want them all to be treated equally as American citizens. The colored man's stomach demands as much as mine; his children need as much milk as mine; his wife also needs a coat to keep her warm. The only difference between a poor Negro and a poor white is color—and that does not lessen hunger, cold, or the desire for the needs of life.

The truth is we Jews do take care of our own, and probably just a little more than other people do. That is because it is a part of our religion to feel a responsibility to our fellow Jews. As a matter of fact, we have so many Jewish organizations doing charity (and taking some of the burden off your shoulders), that they drive Jews frantic every day asking for money for this and that cause.

I had to tell you these things even though they have taken me a long way from what I started to tell you, viz., why I am a capitalist. Let me go on with that. I am a capitalist because I want enough money to pay for my insurance, buy a nice home, give my children a good education, and put enough away for my old age. I do not ever want a handout from the government. I want no part of sickness insurance or unemployment insurance or socialized medicine, or anything that's free. These are all something for nothing schemes. I want none of them. That is pretty good Americanism according to my way of thinking. Or don't you like the idea of my having enough money to buy a house next door to you, or even in your neighborhood? But why should I like a crowded tenement district any more than you do? And if there are newer modern homes with all the new-fangled conveniences, why shouldn't I like them and want to buy one? And why do you feel that I ruin your neighborhood when I move into it? Is it because you think I will neglect my lawn or will not take

care of the backyard? Some of your other neighbors are not so good at that either. Maybe it is true that we Jews do not know as much about grass and flowers and trees as you do. It would not be surprising, because for centuries in all the lands of Europe where my folks came from, and yours too, the Jews were not permitted to own a piece of land. We did not have the opportunity to take care of land, sow crops, trim trees. Not that we never knew how to do this. Abraham did quite well as an owner of flocks. The Jews in Palestine long ago were mighty fine farmers and are again today. In fact they have taken a desert and turned it into a garden. If you are a good neighbor, instead of criticizing me, why don't you walk over some summer evening to give me a few pointers on how to cut the grass, trim the hedges, and make my garden look healthier?

I said that I like capitalism because it gives me a chance for all of these things that I want for myself and my family. But you need not be afraid of me as a capitalist because I am not an important one. I am only a little capitalist like many of you. Of course I have heard of Jews in Wall Street, like Kuhn-Loeb, Otto Kahn, the Guggenheims, the Rosenwalds, and the Warburgs, but they are almost all the big Jewish capitalists I can think of. And even they are of little account compared with the Rockefellers, Morgans, Goulds, Harrimans, Fords and Mellons, and so many more. Try this game yourself. Write down all the rich Jews that you have heard of and all the rich Christians. When you have done this you will no longer believe that the Jews own this country. *Fortune Magazine* presented the facts on this some years ago. They found out what businesses Jews were in and to what extent. Heavy Industry? None. Utilities? None. Banking? Insignificant. Mining? One or two. Steel? Almost none. Then where did you get the idea Jews are all big capitalists

and own America? Here is where you get it. You go to the movies once or twice a week and that reminds you, or someone reminds you, Jews own most of the movie industry. Your wife goes shopping in a department store once a week, and Jews are substantial owners in the department store business. Maybe it is our misfortune, but we are in the businesses with which you most frequently have direct contact.

You can hear the foregoing conversation from many Jewish businessmen.

Possibly you do not mind Jewish capitalists so much. The real sore spot is this Communist fixation. Yes, there are Jews who are Communists and radicals, though Lenin was not a Jew, nor is Joseph Stalin, nor Earl Browder in America. Jews who classify themselves as Communists hate capitalism and would rather have the Russian system here. That applies to a tiny handful of the whole Jewish population of America. And that is also true of a tiny handful of Christian Americans. There are not very many of either. You need not be at all frightened about Communism in America. In every election we have realized how small the Communist vote is. Of course the 1944 presidential election in the United States might have given strength to fears of Communism. It is true that some Republicans told everybody Roosevelt sold out to the Commies and a vote for Frank was a vote for Joe. Since the majority of Americans voted for Frank, the Communists might have claimed the people voted for them. But not even the Commies claimed that. They know, as you do, that the people who voted for Roosevelt *did not* believe he sold out to anyone. They did not believe Browder had any more influence on F.D.R. than you or I had. The majority of Americans refused to be taken in by this "Red scare." In fact, they were afraid only of the men who tried to do the scaring. They remembered Hitler kept screaming, "Look out for the Com-

munists," when he did not want us to look out for him. Many shrewd Yankee politicians did not consider it good politics to talk about Russia as some foul disease, when the Russians were our loyal friends and allies, fighting and dying by the millions to hold Hitler, while we were putting on the gloves and just getting ready.

But I confess without reluctance that I feel strongly about the right of Communists to hold their views and to express them. A large number of the States have recognized the Communists as a legal party. Therefore, as good Americans, we ought to remember that, legally, they have as much right to organize politically as the Democrats, Republicans, Socialists, Farmer-Laborites, Townsendites, or any other political group. The minute we say people who have different political views from our own ought to be kept off the ballot or "ought to go back where they came from," we sound dangerously like Adolf. We have a right to vote against them and to campaign against them—but they have a right to organize, get on the ballot and campaign. That is the American way. It would be a mistake to think that every Jew feels about this as I do. Far from it. Some Jewish capitalists hate Jewish Communists as much as Christian capitalists hate Christian Communists. It is only correct to say Jewish capitalists and upper middle class people probably have an even stronger aversion. They say that a Communist cannot be a good Jew, because a Communist is an atheist and a good Jew believes in God, the Jewish religion, and the Synagogue. They may be right about this. I know some Jewish Communists and they despise everything that is Jewish, our Synagogues, our language and our customs, as much as our religion—just as Christian Communists do not go to church, dislike ministers and priests and scoff at Christmas and Easter.

Many Jews hate Communists because they still remember

that Orthodox rabbis and Jewish Zionist leaders were treated very badly, arrested, and even killed by the first Russian revolutionaries. There are still many Jews in America who have had everything taken away by the Russian Communists and who came to America penniless.

Despite all this, in a free country like America, the Communist party is legal, and the Communists have a right to think what they like. What is more, they have a right to try to convince us if they can. So far they have not made much headway even though the all-out war has made most Americans more sympathetic to the Russian people. The Russian armies have been heroic and the Russian civilians have shown an amazing capacity to suffer and to go on working. There are hosts of Americans, who, having seen all this, have begun to wonder if the remarkable unity of the Russian people is perhaps a result of the Communist system.

But if you cannot quite put your finger on all Jews to call them Communists, you may still feel that most of them are radicals. If what you mean is that they want drastic changes, in this respect you are probably right, if you are thinking about me, the young American Jew. I do not like a lot of things in my country, and would like to change them. But so would the Republicans. If being a radical means wanting drastic changes, Herbert Hoover is a radical and so is Alf Landon, Governor Dewey, and most of the Republican leaders. They wanted to throw out the President as soon as they could; they wanted to change the tax laws; they wanted to overhaul the whole government. The theme song of the 1944 campaign was, "It's time for a change." The only difference between them and me is the kind of change to be made. So remember we all have a right to be radicals of this kind.

Let me tell you what it is I do not like and what I want.

Maybe it is because I am still a *young* American that I have these strange ideas. In 1933, it made me sick to see millions of able-bodied men out of work and on relief. The slouching, bedraggled figures standing silent and sullen in bread lines were a far cry from the head-high Americans who landed on Plymouth Rock, cleared the wilderness, pushed the frontier all the way across the country. "Chins down," instead of "heads up," made America look sick and weak. Back home in "Hooverilles" and "Shantytowns" their kids could not go to school because they had no shoes. All around town, big factories stood empty, still, useless. America had broken down! Its big industrial cities were becoming ghost towns. Thousands of youngsters were riding the rails, chased by constables from one town to another. Remember? That is what we saw with our own eyes.

But what most of us did not see was often worse. I took a trip down South to the "Grapes of Wrath" country. Was it as bad there as some people wrote? It was worse. The roads looked as though a defeated army had been trying to get through. Thousands of homeless sharecroppers were stuck on the sides of the highways in their ancient worn-out jalopies. Whole families were living in a fifteen-year-old touring car. They never got a bath. They used the woods for toilets. They begged food from passing trucks and cooked it in the open. At night they rolled up on the seats and floors of their cars and tried to sleep. A father, mother, and four or five kids in a car. I saw this and was ashamed to be an American. I smelled the garbage they cooked, and vomited. Where was the America of "amber fields of grain"? Where was the land of which we sang "God shed His grace on thee"? I saw these starved and naked children with paper bags for shoes. They could not read or write because they never went to school. They did not stay in any one place long enough to get into a

school. School boards would not take them in. They were not residents. And the sheriffs kept pushing them around. States passed laws to keep them out. They got pushed out of America. They were given new names. "Arkies," "Okies," "sharecroppers." They all cried the same song of the open road. That's the America I am ashamed of and want to change. And that is not all.

We have a million American children from five to thirteen years old working in canning factories and textile plants. They do not know what childhood happiness means. They do not pick flowers in the summer woods and they do not go belly-slamming down the hills in the winter. They just work, every day from morning till night. Do you like that kind of America, neighbor? Let me tell you—I do not. With everything in me, I want to change it. Maybe I feel this way because I am a Jew. It is in my blood to feel sorry for the poor—the starved—the whipped—the driven. I bring this feeling to America and I say I make America better for it. I am confident you do not like a cruel America any more than I do. I want to do everything in my power to change this America. And I do not call it enough change when the government steps in and gives men a job pushing a rake around a park. Most Americans want the chance to do an honest day's work in a man-sized job; to feel they have earned a day's living. I want every child to be able to go to public school and to play after school. I want every American boy and girl to have shoes and clothes to wear, decent food to eat, and a home to live in. I want every American boy and girl to have a chance for college. That is the way to make democracy strong. That is the way to guarantee the love and loyalty of Americans. That is the America people will always fight to defend, if they have to. Of that America, we could honestly say, "God shed His grace on thee!"

Now, neighbor, when anyone comes along, Republican or Democrat or capitalist or Socialist, and gives me an idea about getting these changes, I am for it. No, I am not day-dreaming either. I am wider awake than you think. I know all these things I want for America cost money. It means higher taxes. It means dividing the profits. It means high wages. It means laws. I am for all this. I, the young American Jew, will always fight for these changes. I do not believe in "rugged individualism" which is a polite way of saying, "Every man for himself and let the devil take the hindmost." I am for coöperation, with the stronger helping the weaker. If all this makes you fear me as the Jewish radical, here is more fuel for the fire! I do not like to see a man fired from his job because he belongs to a union. The union is his only protection when the boss tries to cut his wages, lay him off, or make him work too many hours. The union sees to it that the boss complies with the laws about providing safety devices on the machines, clean lavatories, and enough light and air. The union is the working man's organization, just as the Chamber of Commerce is the boss's organization. You say the union is a big racket. Not quite. There is too much racketeering in too many labor unions, but there is enough of the same thing in big business organizations too.

One final and important word about my radicalism, neighbor. I want all improvements and changes made according to the laws of our country and by a majority of the people. I want the Congress to do these things, just as fast as the people tell it to act.

Now let me ask you, is there anything to hate me for in my kind of radicalism? Isn't it a healthy state of mind and isn't it perfectly American? After all, I am not half the radical that George Washington was. He found things he did not like in this country. He thought the government ruling America

was all wrong, so he started a revolution. Every American whose great-great-great-grandfather fought in the Revolution against the King of England, considers himself the very best American. The descendants of those who fought with Washington are so proud their relatives were part of the Revolution that they have formed exclusive societies like the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution. Washington's ideas were similar to mine because both of us were taught from the same Bible. My ancestors wrote that radical Bible. All of us, who still think it is worth while and read it regularly, know that Abraham, Moses, and the prophets, always complaining about things as they were, tried to change them. Abraham changed the world's religion. Moses proclaimed slavery to be an evil. Isaiah warned that no country can enjoy peace until all the world has it. Jesus denounced the bankers in the Temple court. These men were the greatest radicals in history, yet all of us respect them. Isn't this country and the whole world much better off because these men and others who came after them were dissatisfied with things as they found them and made changes?

I promised to be open and frank in everything that I said to you. While I know in advance that you will not like it, I must tell you about something else that makes me a radical. That something else is sometimes you. Some Christians are the people who control all the big chains of business, in which a Jew does not have a chance. I *have* to be against chain businesses, interlocking utilities, and giant corporations. If the Jew were given more opportunity to work in the big corporations or to be advanced to a little executive job, he might not long retain his fear of big business. If all big businessmen were a little more understanding toward labor, there would not be so many Jews in the labor unions either. You cannot

lock Jews out of big business and still expect them to be for it. By these mistakes Christians are encouraging what they consider radicalism among Jews as well as among Christians.

Now, after all that I have said, do you think I am very different in my economic ideas from most *young* Americans of other faiths and is there anything dangerous in my ideas? Are they bad enough to make you hate me for them and suspect that I am the brains behind every movement to ruin America and overthrow the government?

Do these things explain to you why so many Jews supported Roosevelt and the New Deal? Mind you, not all Jews were for Roosevelt. My uncle, a little capitalist, denounced him more than the worst Roosevelt-hater in Wall Street, but it is probably true that a great many Jews followed Roosevelt. They may have been wrong in thinking that his ideas about changing the country and improving it were pretty much like theirs. If a Republican candidate for the presidency could convince such Jews that he is closer to their ideas of social and economic advancement, they would vote for him. The last four election results indicate pretty clearly that not only the Jews but almost two-thirds of the American people felt the same way about Roosevelt.

You may think he was a radical, too. Well, it is worth remembering that his forebears came over on the *Mayflower*, and his aunts, uncles and cousins were all Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution. So remember, radicalism is not confined to Jews, and you ought not to blame all and only Jews for every radical idea in America.

Why should Christians make the mistake of saying, as they often do, that all Jews vote the same way? No one controls the Jewish vote and you will find Jewish leaders and followers in every political party. Take a look at your own home town. You will find there are Jews who are Republican poli-

ticians as well as Democratic ones. In large cities, there are Jewish Republican officeholders as well as Democratic officeholders. Even in the national leadership of the political parties, a sprinkling of Jews is found in both.

Yes, neighbor, I am a capitalist, a Communist, a Republican, a Democrat, a Socialist, and just about everything that the rest of us Americans are. I am like the whole American people. My political views are like yours and in about the same proportions, depending upon the breaks I got in this country, on what side of the railroad tracks I was born, and on how well my folks got along. I am all of these and I do not mind your calling me all three, provided you do not forget the word "all," and provided you do not make the mistake of saying today, "All Jews are Communists," and tomorrow, "All Jews are capitalists and own the whole country." If you want to be fair, just say "Some Jews are capitalists, some are Communists, some are radicals, some are reactionaries, some gripe about everything—pretty much like the rest of us." Then you will be speaking the truth and you will learn to understand us.

VII

I WANT MY SON TO BE A DOCTOR

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

A common Christian prejudice against the Jew is based on the belief a Jew does not like hard labor and seeks an easier way of making a living. Read this, and then judge for yourself.

I want my son to be a doctor or a lawyer or a dentist or an engineer or even a university professor, and I cannot understand why it is wrong for me to have such hopes. Yet on every hand I find that many Christians, and even some of my fellow Jews, make it appear to be an unworthy ambition. Right now an important Jewish organization sends out posters to be placed in synagogues and Jewish Sunday schools, frightening out of their ambitions my son and as many other Jewish sons as will read it. The posters say in effect that Jewish boys should prepare to become steelworkers, farmers, machine operators, tailors, sanitation workers and tradesmen. In fact, they encourage Jewish boys to enter every possible field except what is regarded as a profession. When I read these signs, I ask myself, "Is there something wrong or disgraceful in being a doctor or a lawyer or a dentist or a teacher? Are these professions rackets or unethical frauds?" While Christians do not put up posters, some look with suspicion and fear upon the large percentage of Jews who try to get into the professions.

Their attitude on this matter is more serious than you real-

ize. It appears that they have made up their minds there are too many Jews in the professions. Therefore they use every means to stop Jews from getting anywhere near them. Some of the best educated Christians in America have been part of this open and sometimes secret effort to close the doors of the professions to Jews. The best colleges in America have established quotas on the number of Jews who will be admitted each year. When they are charged with doing this, they deny it, because it would be bad public relations to admit it; but the quotas are there just the same. They try to keep the Jew out of college because that brings him a step nearer to a graduate school and ultimately a profession. To be more thorough, they ought to start with the high schools, for if a young Jew does not graduate from a high school, there will be no need to worry about his coming within ten miles of a college campus. Or they might even begin at the elementary level, for then they would be keeping the Jew at a safe distance from any education. Would they like to have the next generation of American Jews illiterate? In the long run it will not pay to curb the education of American Jews. An illiterate Jewish community in America will not produce a Brandeis, Cardozo, Frankfurter, or Lewisohn, or any of the famous Jewish research workers in medicine, chemistry, and the other sciences. They might remember also that they would be adding five million to the number of illiterates already in America. People who cannot read or write do not make good citizens because they cannot take an intelligent interest in their government.

Of course no Christian gentleman, and certainly no college president or professor, will ever admit that they try to keep bright young men out of the universities because they are Jews. But here is an incident which illustrates how they operate. When all the European universities began to throw

the Jews out, some students fled to America. One of them came to my town and told me his story. He was brought up in Vienna, went to school there and was in his last year at the medical school when the Nazis marched in and drove him out. All he wanted now was a chance to finish medical school and to get started on his life's work, healing the sick. We have a good medical school in our city, and I promised I would go up to see the dean about this boy's getting in. I told the dean the story of the refugee from Vienna, presenting his credentials, which substantiated the claim that he was a top-notch student. The dean looked at the papers very carefully, turned a pair of steel-blue eyes upon me, and spoke in a calm and deliberate voice: "This boy certainly has a fine record. It is indeed a stupid world in which he was not permitted to complete his education. But of course you will realize it is quite impossible for us to admit him. The European standards are not the same as ours."

"But this boy would be willing to go through even four years of your school," I replied. "He does not care how long it takes him. All he wants is a chance to become a doctor and to devote his life to healing the sick."

"Yes, I appreciate that," the dean answered, "but it would not be possible for us to help this boy."

The last he said with finality. I was not ready to give up, deciding we might as well get down to brass tacks. "Dean," I continued, "I know that you have admitted other refugees. Let us speak frankly. Is it because this young man is a Jew that you decline to admit him?"

"No," answered the dean. "Absolutely not. We do not discriminate against Jews here. As a matter of fact, in every freshman class that comes in, eight or nine per cent of the men are Jewish."

There was the story. Just eight or nine per cent of every

freshman class was Jewish. By what strange accident was the percentage the same each year? It was not an accident. It was a determined, cold, relentless policy. The dean had given himself away. This is the pattern of a policy that is maintained throughout the length and breadth of this great free land of America, which was founded upon the religious doctrine that every man should be given free opportunities in the pursuit of his happiness. In the confidential files of most of the medical schools of our land, you will find the same policy.

While I said before, neighbor, that if such Christians were thorough, they ought to make sure that all young Jews remain illiterate, I know that they do not want all Jews to be illiterate. They would even admit them to the colleges more freely if Jews would guarantee to keep out of the professions. Christians do not mind so much if my son goes to Harvard or Yale for, after all, if their sons are there too, they do not have to mix with mine or let him into their fraternity. But they are determined my son shall not be a doctor, lawyer, or dentist? Why? Have they analyzed this matter for themselves? Have they taken their prejudices apart to look at them fairly? Their first feeling is that the Jews ruin the professions. Then they begin to mention the shyster lawyers, the quack doctors, the gyp dentists who are Jews. But that answer is only an excuse. They know it is not the whole truth. They know that every shyster lawyer is not a Jew, and every medical practitioner whose license is revoked is not a Jew. Some are, of course, but some of these unethical people are Christians. Haven't they ever had a Christian doctor who gave them no help? There are incompetent doctors, lawyers, and dentists and they are sons of the church and the mosque, as well as of the synagogue. They are Negro, white, Episcopalian, Baptist, and Seventh Day Adventists, as well as

Jews. Furthermore, Christians will not deny that the Jews have their share of top-notchers in every profession. Ask your friends. Many of them swear by a Jewish doctor or a Jewish lawyer.

If, then, the basis of Christian prejudice cannot be that the Jews are ruining the professions, their next argument is: "Well, if they are not ruining them, at least they are overcrowding the professions." There is indeed a half-truth in this because a few years ago it did seem that all of the professions were overcrowded, though even that was an illusion and not the real truth. In an emergency such as war, we found out very quickly that there were not half enough doctors or dentists to go around. The army and navy needed so many of them that we drained our cities and villages. If any serious epidemic were to come, we would find ourselves in a helpless situation. Some people have come to the conclusion that not only are these professions not overcrowded, but even in peace time there are not enough medical men in the country. Unfortunately, there are still a few million Americans who cannot afford to see a doctor or a dentist even when they need one. That is why these professionals are not busy all of the time and do not get enough business. That is why America is not as healthy a country as it could be. At the beginning of the war when the army and navy still adhered to high physical standards, the draft boards had to turn down two out of every ten men. They could not make the grade. The armed forces finally had to lower their physical standards or they could not have gotten enough soldiers and sailors. That does not augur well for America's future. If all the people in America had enough money to patronize the medical men when their health required it, we would not have nearly enough medicos in any city in the Union. Some day we shall get around to doing something about this.

But to come back to the point that we were speaking about in the beginning. Even if Christians were right about the professions being overcrowded, it still would be far from fair to argue that the Jews are overcrowding them. If they want to thin out the professions, the fair thing is to get the medical schools to raise their requirements for admission—and to raise them for everybody who applies. This means that the Jews would have to take their chances with everybody else. I do not care what requirements are set up, whether they are a matter of college grades, intelligence tests, or any other kind of standard by which they decide whether student X should be admitted to the school, so long as they do not bar my son because his name is Goldstein, his nose is of a different shape from the gentile boy's, or because his hair or eyes are of a different color. These little physical differences certainly have nothing to do with making a good lawyer or doctor.

Let us suppose that my boy and some of his Jewish friends get by the requirements, jump all the hurdles that are set up, and become lawyers or doctors. Christians still will not have to patronize them if they do not want to. No one will compel them to. They do not have to worry as to how the Jews will make a living or whether there are enough Jews in the country to support them. That is the professional's own responsibility. He may find some intelligent Christians who will employ him because of his skill and will not be concerned about his religion. All that the Jew asks is that he be given a chance to be what he wants to be. Then let him shift for himself. All that he expects is that you do not stand in his way because he is a Jew.

Maybe you have come along this far, neighbor, but still have other questions to ask. "Why do so many Jewish boys *want* to be in a profession? Why do they *want* to make a liv-

ing with their heads instead of their hands?" For hundreds of years in all the European lands where your people and mine lived together, mine were kept out of the occupations that required manual labor. A Jew could not be a farmer because he could never own a piece of land. His neighbors said the land was sacred and Jewish hands would defile it. A Jew could not be a weaver, coppersmith, or shoemaker because the Christian population had set up a system of guilds. (By the way, it should be remembered that we did not start the unions.) The guilds would not let a Jew in. Thus Jews were kept out of all crafts and became estranged from working with their hands. All this does not mean that Jews cannot be skilled workmen or good farmers. On the contrary, for the longest part of our history, beginning with Father Abraham, our chief occupations were tending sheep, raising cattle, tilling the soil, and planting vineyards in Palestine. For a good while after we were driven out of Palestine, we were artisans—and good ones. Some of the best silversmiths and goldsmiths in the world today are the Jews who live in Yemen, a tiny little country near Palestine. The Yemenite Jews of today have inherited their art and skill from their forefathers of hundreds of years ago.

If the Jews of Europe could not own land or be craftsmen, how did they make a living? What did they do with their time? The answer is they did not make a living, at least none to speak of. They were the outcasts of society. They lived behind ghetto walls which their neighbors built. They starved most of the time or lived off each other. They were compelled to engage in secret businesses which the Christian world regarded as illegal. Jews were forced to do this or to give up the ghost. Behind these ghetto walls what did Jewish parents prepare their sons to be? They prepared them to be scholars. The only education they received was Jewish edu-

cation. The only books they read were Jewish books. The Old Testament, the Talmud, law codes, Hebrew story books—these were the exclusive materials on which Jewish children were brought up. Even in all this darkness and misery, once in a while the soul of a Jewish child would try to sing. Such a child would busy himself with learning the cantillation of the Old Testament and the ancient musical motifs of the Hebrew prayer-book. Thus an undying interest in music was engraved on the character of the Jew. This period of our history made us a “bookish” people and our chief contributions to the world since then have not been in music or art or science, nor in the crafts. Our main gifts have been The Book and other books, in every language spoken by the civilized nations of the world.

Our way of thinking and talking has been influenced by this bookishness. Even Jews, who themselves are dullards, respect the man of the book more than the man of means. Study and learning are a part of our religion and our law books tell us that the religious Jew must set aside a time each day for study, no matter how humble be his means or his occupation. To the religious Jew, the chief business of his life is to know the will of God, revealed in the Bible and explained in other works. There is an old saying in our religious literature, “The ignorant man cannot be a righteous man.” Jewish mothers sing to the babes in their laps, “The Torah is the best merchandise in the world.” The Jew drinks in a love and respect for The Book as he drinks his mother’s milk.

Up until World War II, Poland was the center of Jewish life. Several million Jews lived there. They were the poorest Jews in the world, but there was hardly a single Polish-Jewish family that did not boast of a scholar. There were great schools of Jewish learning in every large city in Poland. There were little colleges at almost every crossroad and in

the smallest villages. This was typical of the whole Jewish people for long, long centuries. We confess the truth of the charge that we have learned to live by the book rather than by our hands, and we have grown to like the book better than manual labor. For centuries it was quite natural that when a young Jew thought about preparing for his future, he thought of a book rather than of a machine or an implement.

When the French Revolution gave birth to the words, "freedom, equality and liberty" for all men, Jews included, the ghetto walls were broken down and millions of bookish Jews came out into the bright light of what promised to be a new free world for them (but wasn't). What was more natural than that they should flock to the libraries and the schools, eagerly picking up the strange new books written in stranger languages? The new books opened the minds of Jewish young men to the sciences and the professions. They were dazzled by the bewildering light of new knowledge. Their minds had been sharpened by long centuries of the exclusive diet of books, and the burning bright eyes that had until now pored over the ancient folios, the Bible and Talmud, found new fields for exploration. Some of us Jews are not too happy about this. The Bible and Talmud have been neglected too long now; the Hebrew language is already strange to Jewish tongues. Some of our best young brains now excel in every field of knowledge except their own native heritage of Jewish knowledge. This interest in books explains why our young folks look to the professions for their future careers.

In our own time we have seen a startling change in this Jewish habit. Over in Palestine, there are once again half a million Jews building a new land. Among these pioneers of the soil the Jewish philosophy of life has been radically

altered. With the good earth beckoning to him, the ambition of a Palestinian Jewish youth is no longer to enter a profession. He looks down upon the professionals. He does not consider their work the most important. This Jewish lad wants to be a first-class farmer, cattle-raiser, or orange grower. There is no doubt that in Palestine the Jews are returning to their early occupations. There it is considered an honor to be able to use one's hands as well as one's head.

You ought to know, neighbor, that those of us who think seriously about the welfare of our young people would be very happy if there were good opportunities for young Jewish people here in America, in occupations other than the professions. It would be a fine thing if more Jews wanted to go back to the farms or work in the factories, but it would be desirable only for those who really wanted to do it. More than anything else, I believe in democracy, and one of democracy's first principles is that every fellow must get a fair chance to develop himself as *he thinks best* or *likes best*, as long as he does not interfere with the rest of us. Democracy means that Christians have no right even to make the effort to stop young Jews from being anything they would like to be that is of benefit to all of us. Every young man or woman in this country should be regarded as an American citizen who has the right to make the most of the gifts he possesses or thinks he possesses. Young American Jews ask for only one thing as they try to build their futures: a fair chance. They do not think it is fair to be ruled out because of their religion, name or complexion. They do not think it is fair for anyone to say, "Only ten Jews may be admitted annually to the freshman medical or law class." The universities and their presidents who have been saying this for a good many years either do not understand democracy or do not like it. But you, neighbor, are a plain citizen and you

do think the democratic way is a good thing for America. You have a right to say, "only ten young Americans should enter the freshman class at Harvard, Yale or Princeton because that is all any profession can absorb each year. Let these ten be Negroes, Catholics, Protestants, Jews or Mohammedans. Let us give them all the same test. Let the best ten win, and in the long run, America will gain most."

VIII

ARE THE JEWS CLANNISH?

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

They are. This time you are right, even though their clannishness is not a good thing for them or for you. Jews ought to feel more comfortable than they do among Christians. Jewish boys and girls in college should have a social life together with their non-Jewish friends. Fraternities might be non-sectarian. Jews and Christians could learn to play together as well as work together in America. How do we square this with the fact that the Jews *are* clannish? It is true that they congregate in neighborhoods, vacation in Jewish summer and winter resorts, establish their own golf clubs and even their own professional societies. But has it ever occurred to you that the clannishness which you dislike, Christians have themselves created with painstaking care? They have put the "gentile only" sign on hotels and vacation spots. They have written the law, "no Jews allowed," in their golf clubs. They have joined together in making the rule, "restricted clientele," apply to their suburban allotments. They have done all this, and yet complain about the Jew's being clannish! What did they expect the Jew to do, tear down the signs and say, "Please take me in?" Some Jews have done this, and they command very little respect from their fellow Jews. Real friendship means going halfway toward someone. To do more than that is to push yourself among people who do not want you. The man who does that has little self-respect.

Jews go on vacations not to be snubbed, but to have a good time. If they sense Christians do not want them around, they form Jewish clubs of their own. They play a better game of golf among friends; their style is cramped in an unfriendly atmosphere. That is why there are Jewish golf clubs all over the country, even though every Jew in the club would be happy to have a game with his Christian business or professional associates.

The same reasoning holds true for the Jewish neighborhoods which Christians often consider a blight upon communities. Some Jews are tough-skinned about exercising their rights. They will live where they want to. They will move next door to you and will not care if you do not say hello to them for the rest of your life. But most Jews are sensitive about being disliked. They are particularly sensitive about anyone's slighting their children. They therefore feel more secure in moving into neighborhoods where there are a good many other Jews. This herding instinct of the Jewish people has a long history. Subconsciously they have not forgotten that for more centuries than they like to remember, Jews herded together for the plain necessity of protection. Jews learned through the bitter school of experience that they could defend themselves better in groups than when they were alone. That is why few Jews are to be found even today in outlying farming districts. Many Jews are still afraid of Christians. They still fear that some day some Christians may lose all the marks of civilization, go berserk, and come out shrieking, "Christ killer!" As long as there is the spirit of anti-Semitism in the air, the Jew has good reason to be afraid of his neighbor and to herd with his own for self-preservation. I hope this feeling will pass, and the Jew will one day begin to look upon every Christian as just another citizen like himself without fear and suspicion. Perhaps

a developing friendship and brotherhood in America will destroy the walls that still stand between us. But you, neighbor, are the one who must do the main job. Jews will be glad to coöperate in breaking down their clannishness. But first Christians will have to learn to be ashamed of their "gentile only" signs. They must convince themselves that such acts on their part are not only un-American, but they are unbrotherly, anti-religious, inhuman. They will have to learn that they make for division among the American population, not for unity. Their preachers will have to denounce these signs, which are signs of gentile feelings. They must open up their clubs and their resorts. Their hands must come forth first in the warm clasp of friendship. Their smile will have to melt the icy stare they so often give the Jew in a railroad dining car or when he sits down next to them in the concert hall and on the beach.

I am speaking not only about the Christians who are fundamentalist die-hards, who think that the Jew must be an everlasting sign of punishment because of his rejection of Jesus. The evil practice of social ostracism is prevalent even among liberals—those who call themselves Christian liberals. They are the ones who take the attitude: "They will sympathize with the Jews and often respect the Jews. They will not permit themselves to speak falsehood about the Jews. But they certainly see no reason why they should associate socially with Jews." They cannot be charged with being anti-Semites in any way at all, but only with being snobs. Let me make it clear, Jews do not crave social contact with gentiles. But gentiles ought to know it is inevitable that the absence of it means to the Jew a social life exclusively with Jews. It means eating, drinking, talking, vacationing, and playing only with Jews. This is clannishness. It is a clannishness which is imposed upon the Jew and, therefore,

Christians have no right to complain about it. If you think it is not the best thing for America, the Jew will agree with you, but it is still true that Christians are the only ones who can change this. Try it out some day to see how the Jew will respond.

In no way is this meant to imply that it is unfriendly for Christians to maintain exclusively Christian youth or adult associations. Nor would the Jew surrender the same right for himself. But such groups are justifiable when they are dedicated to purposes which Christians have in common only with each other. A church youth group is meant to foster Christian fellowship. A Christian summer retreat is intended to revive Christian piety. Jews neither ask nor have any right to ask for admission. But where people meet in non-denominational groupings, for purely social, recreational, secular, or professional purposes, there all should be welcome who wish to share in the program of activities. By practicing exclusion on religious grounds we not only exhibit a divisive prejudice, but we destroy the opportunity to foster friendship, brotherhood, and American fellowship through common action.

IX

COME INTO MY HOUSE

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

Now that we are better acquainted as a result of our previous conversations, perhaps it is proper to tell you a bit of personal experience. About twenty years ago I went to college in a little town in southern Ohio. Miami University nestles among the fertile farm lands of the Miami valley. The town of Oxford has about twelve hundred population, all Christians. The students come from surrounding farms and hamlets. You can smell the hayseed in every classroom. No more than two or three Jewish students had ever been enrolled at Miami, and that year I was the only Jew on the campus. I learned that hardly any of the students had ever talked to a Jew, and some had never seen one.

Upon arriving I went to my room, unpacked my clothes, washed up, and then decided to walk down to the dormitory lounge to get acquainted. At the top of the stairs, looking down, I saw the room filled with freshmen engaged in lively conversation. Suddenly someone spied me coming down the stairs. The news had gotten around quickly. A voice from the center of the room introduced me with, "Here comes the wandering Jew." If I were not afraid that you would attribute it to "characteristic" cupidity, I would suggest the college should have paid me for coming, for I became at once as valuable as any exhibit in the college museum. I became the "college Jew." What wild ideas those farmer-students

had about Jews! Some of them expected to see a bearded monster with horns sticking out of his head. Others expected this seventeen-year-old Jewish student to look like "an Elder of Zion," such as they had seen caricatured in the *Dearborn Independent*. At first, I enjoyed more comfort in the classroom than I cared for. Somehow, the four chairs on all sides of me were always left vacant. I was in quarantine. These farmer-students were cautious. Who knows, they thought, maybe the Jew carries a variety of disease germs in his pocket. My classmates gave me furtive looks. The Professor sensed the problem, and thought it best to ignore me. Surveying this situation, I began to wonder about the kind of Sunday School education these religious Christians had received!

From Sunday School, church, table conversation at home, and cloakroom whispering, they had formed a composite picture of something they had never seen in the flesh, and they named it "the wandering Jew." The fellow who lived next door in the dorm finally broke down to tell me he had heard every Jewish church had vast stores of ammunition in the cellar. I asked him, "What for?" He looked me straight in the eye and in a low voice answered, "You know what for."

I began to wonder then how I could free these otherwise normal fellows of the dark and foreboding ideas and fears about me, the Jew. How could I make them see me as just another fellow-student who ate, drank, slept, hoped and worked just as they did? After some weeks, one of the boys became quite friendly, and I finally mustered up the courage to ask him to come home with me for a week-end so that he might find out what the Jews are really like. He found out, and we have remained good friends these twenty years.

I took this long detour, neighbor, to explain why I am in-

viting you into my house so that you, too, can see how we Jews live.

On the way into my house, you will find on the right-hand doorpost, about two-thirds of the way up, a little rectangular box made of wood or metal. Don't let it frighten or even worry you. There is no voodoo witchcraft connected with it. In the box is a tiny roll of parchment on which is written in Hebrew letters an excerpt from the Book of Deuteronomy of the Bible, which says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. . . ." The little box with its message is up there to tell me in brief, "Whenever you come into this house or when you go out of it into the world about, remember to be a civilized human being. Remember the lessons of the Bible about being honest, kind, and gentle and merciful in all of your dealings with people, in your office, shop and store. Remember to make your home a little temple of God. Bring sweetness and light with you when you enter. Let your wife, parents and children have reason to be happy that you have come home. And when you go out of the house touch your fingers to the little box to remind yourself of the sacred obligation to make the outside world as happy and kindly a place as your home."

Jews call the little box and its writing a Mezuzah. It is prescribed by biblical statute in chapter six of the Book of Deuteronomy. From what one reads about increasing divorces in America and the unhappiness in so many homes, it would seem that these reminders might be a wholesome thing for everyone. Of course I am not suggesting it for Christians. I am only noting that they seem good to us Jews, they are part of our way of life, and we like them. Let us hope the next time you see a Mezuzah on your Jewish neighbor's house or apartment, you will understand that it is no superstitious symbol and has no secret power. It is the sign

of a Jewish home which the Jew sets up to remind himself of the ideals of that home.

Now that you have finally crossed my threshold you have seen that my house is as clean as yours and has about the same kind of furniture. If you are a poor Christian and I am a poor Jew, then my furniture is as cheap and simple as yours. If we are both in better circumstances, then my furniture is very likely as good and well-made as yours. If neither of us has refined tastes, my household goods are as gaudy as yours.

We Jews have an old tradition about hospitality. Do you remember how Father Abraham, sitting in his tent, was visited by the three strangers who looked tired and hungry? He promptly asked them to stay overnight and to eat with him. Religious Jews take that story as a guide. They consider it both a good deed and a religious obligation to extend hospitality to strangers. Sit down, neighbor, and we shall enjoy having you for dinner. The Hebrew words I recite for grace are a little prayer which says, "Thank you, God, for the blessing of food." You call the prayer "Grace" and we call it "Motzi."

It is not surprising if you seem a bit hesitant as we start to eat. Yes, the food must be strange to you. My wife cooks differently from yours. We relish these special Jewish dishes, such as stuffed fish, zimmes, chopped liver, putscha, sweet and sour fish, cholent, herring, etc. The different style of cooking ought not to disturb you if you remember that your wife does not cook the same way as neighbor Smith's. Cooking depends on what part of America or Europe we happen to come from. Irish Americans favor mulligan stew and corned beef and cabbage. Our fellow Americans who hail from Hungary eat gobs of paprikash and goulash. Southerners are brought up on fried chicken and New Englanders are renowned for their baked beans and codfish.

I cannot serve butter with the meat, or cream with the coffee, but you understand this already because we explained it in an earlier conversation.

I hope you liked the meal and are acquiring a taste for Jewish cooking. Variety is the spice of life and most Americans are unusually adventurous in seeking novel dishes. We crowd the Chinese restaurants so that a Chinese hardly has a chance to get in. Quite frequently Christians come into Jewish restaurants to order "gefilte fish" or "kreplach." The next time you feel you would like "kreplach," come over and we shall have them for you.

Now that we have finished eating, we follow good medical advice to sit still for a while. We Jews consider it improper to fold our napkins and walk away from the table, immediately after swallowing the last morsel. We first thank God again for having satisfied our hunger. We remember in our prayer that there are millions of people who do not have as much as we do. These days some of us think about the thousands in India and Poland who drop in the streets each day from hunger. We know there is enough food in the world, but it just does not get around. In some places people die of hunger, and elsewhere they diet to get thin. So we pray that we may help God dish out the earth's food more equitably in order that everyone may get enough.

The only time you would find any change in our way of eating would be on our Sabbaths and holidays. Every Friday eve at sundown (our holidays all begin at sundown), my wife lights the candles on the dinner table as she prays to God that there may always be light in our home and in every home in the world. To a great many Jews, their fondest memory is their mother kindling the Sabbath lights. It is the Jewish people's greatest gesture of love for all men everywhere. Especially today this custom means a great deal to

us, as we remember that millions of people live in darkness and fear. We pray that the lights may go on and stay on everywhere, turning shadows and tears into brightness and smiles.

After the candles are lit, you would see me hold up a glass of wine and sing a Hebrew prayer. The prayer thanks God for the gift of grapes and wine which makes the hearts of men jolly. Ponder over this for a moment and you will understand much about your Jewish neighbor's soul: Jews thank God for wine, yet you probably have rarely seen a Jew drunk. Here is how we look at it. Drunkenness is a sin, and it is the rare Jew who ever gets drunk. At the same time, many of us like to take a little nip now and then, as we remember that a wise Lord created grapes as well as grapefruit. In praying over a glass of wine we are reminded that it was intended to make us happy, not drunk and sick. We Jews are not blue-noses. We do not believe any of our human feelings, not even our sex desires, are emotions of which to be ashamed. We are certain God knew what he was doing in fashioning us the way he did. Eating and drinking, laughing and sex are to be enjoyed, controlled, and used properly for greater human happiness.

By the way, neighbor, back in the Old Country, some people had a superstition about our wine which would be ludicrous if it had not brought us so much sorrow. From time to time a fantastic rumor would spread in a little European town that the red liquid Jews drank on Sabbaths and holidays was the blood of Christian children. Usually a few Jews and frequently a few hundred Jews were murdered, to see if their blood offered any evidence! Thank God that's one we have not heard in America. Americans are not that gullible. They understand that we, like you, drink wine because it is sweet, and we hope that sweetness will take

the place of bitterness in the hearts and on the lips of men everywhere.

Well, that was a pretty long drink. Yes, even my two little girls and my wife get a sip out of the same glass of wine. Perhaps you are wondering why this prayer (which we call "Kiddush" or "sanctification"), takes so long if it is only to thank God for wine. The answer is that we speak of other more important matters in the prayer. We recall that the Sabbath we celebrate is described in the Bible as a holiday declared by God when the world was created, to indicate that all people must have a day of rest; that it is evil and contrary to the will of God for people to be enslaved to labor with never a chance to rest. Physical slavery breaks the bodies which God intended should be well taken care of. Slavery to labor makes machines out of human beings. We Jews, therefore, know that we must ever strive for the time when men, women and children will be able to rest and play as well as work. Nor is that all we say in this "Kiddush" prayer every Sabbath eve. We remind ourselves that once we too were slaves in Egypt. We are not ashamed to remember our bondage as we promise to aid those who are still in servitude and to fight for their freedom.

We are not selfish about our holidays, our happiness and our resting. The blessings we enjoy, we wish for all others.

This is the religious introduction to our Sabbath meal which you can see repeated each week and each holiday in my home. If you drop in on the Passover, you will see more. Our evening meal on that holiday is a family reunion. Everyone has a storybook which we read each Passover. We take turns around the table, each one reading a paragraph. The story is about the Jewish slaves in Egypt and how God emancipated them with the help of Moses. Of course the food is different on Passover. As the Bible commands, we

eat no bread, but instead the flat cakes (matzos) which the Egyptian Jews ate. We also use special dishes and silverware during the Passover holiday, to be sure they have not been touched by bread. At the end of the Passover dinner, every little child receives a gift, if he has stayed awake during the extended festivities. It is the happiest of all Jewish holidays and lasts eight days. This is the holiday Christians call Easter, which was originally the ancient Jewish Passover. That famous painting, "The Last Supper," depicts Jesus and his companions at the Passover meal.

Now that you know the mysteries of my dining room and kitchen, you are aware that they resemble yours in many ways. We eat matzos on Passover; you eat Easter eggs. We have a special soup; you must have fruit cake for Christmas. Both of us will travel across the country to celebrate the holidays at the family hearth.

Perhaps you wonder what the rest of my house is like. Come and see, for it is exactly like yours, bedrooms and bathrooms. Here we are both the same, neighbor. We are human beings whom God made alike. We even have the same number of squeaky doors and leaking faucets. Would you care to come into the living room to have a smoke? The picture over there on the wall is that of a great Jew, Theodore Herzl. He was the man who tried to reestablish the Jewish nation in Palestine. We regard him as a patriot of the Jewish people, just as Washington, on the other wall, is a patriot to all of us Americans. The little woodcut over the fireplace is the Ten Commandments in Hebrew. Here in the bookcase are a good many volumes that are not found in your house. Here is our family Bible, in Hebrew, and some of my grandfather's holiday prayer-books. Here is a shelf of books written by great modern Hebrew authors. We always have some of the current Jewish magazines around.

You probably have these other books, such as Beard's "History of American Civilization," "Little Women," which my daughter reads, and "Great Figures of the Baseball Diamond." You think Jews have more books in their homes than Christians? Perhaps, but I am not so sure. It would not be surprising, because we have been known in history as "the people of the book." For many centuries Jews handled books as easily as others handled hunting guns and fishing rods. By and large, we went in for the "indoor life." There are reasons for that too, which have been mentioned before and had best be forgotten. We do think every Jew ought to spend at least an hour a day reading Jewish books or magazines. That is the way to be an intelligent Jew.

I see you have been looking at your watch, neighbor. Yes, it is getting late. I hope you have enjoyed the evening as much as I have. Of course I shall be glad to return your visit. I will not be frightened by the crucifix in your living room. On the contrary, it is reassuring to know you are a religious Christian. When a Christian practices Christianity, the Jew has nothing to fear from him. It is only the kind who say they are Christians, but behave like pagans, that disturb Jews.

Good night, neighbor. We are both better Americans after this evening together.

X

WHAT ABOUT PALESTINE?

I

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

It will take some time to explain this business about Palestine but I trust you will not mind because it is one of the most urgent subjects we have to discuss. Your understanding can mean the difference between life and death to the Jewish people today, not only to the European Jews who need a home but to all the Jews in the world. Their survival as a Jewish people depends upon what happens in Palestine. What develops there depends upon you as well as upon us Jews. This is not to say that if you are against us we are defeated. A people as old as we are does not surrender so easily. On the Palestine matter the whole world has been against us for nineteen centuries, but we have not weakened for a moment. With your understanding, this nineteen-hundred-year old struggle could finally be ended and you could participate in fulfilling no less than the will of God himself.

When you hear or see the word, "Palestine," you most likely think of the following: "Jews and Arabs Riot," "Jews Protest British Policy," "Jews Demand Further Immigration into Palestine," "British Investigate Palestine Disturbances," "Crisis in Palestine." The repetition of these headlines in the papers for the past twenty years has caused you to think of the situation in three words: "Palestine—Jews—trouble." But the time has now come when you must sit down and

listen objectively to the Jewish side of this story and make up your mind where you stand. Every Christian of good will wants to do justice to the Jew. Justice can be done if you will take the trouble to think this through.

In the book of Genesis, God declares to Abraham, "To you do I give this land and to your seed after you unto all generations." From that time until this day there have always been Jews in Palestine. They have been conquered, their governments have been destroyed by various powers, but a handful of Jews always remained as a sign that the Jews had not abdicated their rights to the country. Five hundred and eighty-six years before the birth of Jesus, the Babylonians invaded the first Jewish kingdom in Palestine, carrying away most of the captives to Babylonia—but *some Jews succeeded in remaining in their homeland*. Forty years later, forty thousand of the captives returned and reestablished a Jewish kingdom. There the Jews remained until the year 70 of the Common Era, when the Romans conquered them. They drove the Jews out, burned down the Holy Temple, plowed up all the land, and sowed it with salt so that nothing might ever grow there again. In Rome, the returning conquerors erected a huge triumphal arch which stands unto this day. On top of it they inscribed, "Herusolymna est perdita," "Jerusalem is destroyed." To the Romans, that meant the Jews, as well as their country, were destroyed forever. It was a lie. Some still remained in the land. They hid out in the hills of Judea. They did not forsake their sacred soil. In 1944, in Rome, Jewish soldiers from all over the world walked up to that arch, took a good look at what is written on it, and said, "Oh, yeah?"

Through the long and dreary centuries of exile in Babylonia, in North Africa, Spain, Germany, France, Poland, Russia, Jews clung with a fierce love to the ancient cradle of

their birth and to the hope of returning to it. In their dreams they saw Rachel's tomb, the resting places of their kings, and the streets their prophets trod. They saw young maidens still dancing on the hills of Judea and happy herdsmen still grazing their cattle in the valleys of Jezreel. They wrote a prayer into their daily prayer-book, repeating three times each day, "O Lord, may our eyes behold Thy return unto Zion." World conquerors passed through Palestine with their armies, one ruler after another possessing it and abusing it. But a handful of Jews always remained. They never lost the faith that one day the Almighty One, the Father of Israel, would gather together his scattered children to lead them back in triumph to their ancestral home. During the nineteen hundred years after the Roman conquest, the Holy Land was neglected—the sands of the desert swept over it, no plowman walked the plains, no planter pruned the vineyards on the once green slopes. Time buried the land of Israel, and the fertile soil became a barren wasteland. The mountain springs washed the earth from the sloping hills until they became rocky, forbidding cliffs. The once beautiful valleys became swamps, infested with deadly malaria. Palestine slept the sleep of the dead.

During the First World War, Britain's military strategy required the driving of the Turks out of Palestine. Turkey had entered the war against the Allied Powers in October, 1914. A substantial number of Jews were expelled from Palestine and fled to Egypt. Among the Jewish refugees in Egypt was Vladimir Jabotinsky. He organized a Jewish Battalion known as the Zion Mule Corps, which was placed under British command and worked heroically at Gallipoli. When the British finally entered Palestine, a large Jewish battalion (which won fame as the Jewish Legion) fought under General Allenby until the collapse of Turkey in

September, 1918. The soldiers of the Jewish Legion on September 28, 1918, triumphantly entered Jerusalem with Allenby, at last redeeming their ancient homeland from Turkish rule.

At the same time, another Jewish leader, Chaim Weizmann, made a significant contribution to Allied victory. He was a chemist working in the British Admiralty laboratories in London. He discovered acetonebutyl fermentation, a process which greatly aids the manufacture of explosives that were critically needed at a time when Allied fortunes of war were at a low ebb. Weizmann's other major interest was restoring Palestine to the Jewish people. Throughout the war he was a world leader of the Zionist movement: He remained long after undisputed leader of the Jews of the world.

In 1917, the British Government, through Lord Balfour, recognizing the moral validity of the claims of Weizmann and other Jewish and non-Jewish leaders in every country, issued a proclamation in which it promised that Great Britain would "facilitate the establishment in Palestine of a Jewish National Home." That meant to every Jew and to every government in the world that Britain promised the reestablishment of a Jewish nation in Palestine. It meant that after nineteen hundred years, justice was at last to be done to the Jews; the prayers of centuries were to be fulfilled. Subsequently, all the Allies, including the Congress of the United States, by official act, subscribed to the stated purpose of the Balfour Declaration. The League of Nations made England the temporary guardian of the Holy Land to help the Jews reestablish themselves there, because much work remained to be done before the Jews would be in a position to govern the land themselves.

A wave of hope and enthusiasm swept over the Jewish

world. In the far corners of the earth, Jews offered prayers of thanksgiving to the Lord and gratitude to the nations of the world for this act of justice. Through the instrument of the Jewish National Fund established as early as 1903, they began to collect funds to buy the land in Palestine from Turkish and Arab owners who had title to it. They created the Palestine Foundation Fund to assist farmers in settling on the land. The poor gave pennies; the rich gave thousands. A medical unit of Jewish nurses and doctors went over first to clear the haze of malaria so that others might follow. They looked upon their dead land, and wept in sorrow. They walked into the swamps, to work and die so that others could live there. Then began the long trek of Israel that has not yet ended and will not end until the Jewish commonwealth is reestablished. From the ghettos of Poland, Lithuania, Austria, Roumania, young and old Jews began to travel the long road home. The aged came to die in peace, the young to build a future. They reached the shores of the land of Israel and knelt to kiss mother earth. They too wiped away the tears as with frenzied joy they rolled up their sleeves and went to work. They built roads and blasted the rock in the mountainsides. They established little farming colonies. They planted vineyards, orange groves, and lovingly tilled the earth. Hundreds died during stealthy Arab attacks by night; others were the victims of deadly malaria. They planted crops and saw them burned down by hostile desert tribes. They built hospitals and a great university on Mt. Scopus. Electric power plants were erected. Little by little, the wonders of the West were brought again to the East. No more heroic saga of pioneering has ever been written. The world looked on with astonishment and the Jews rejoiced in their hardening muscles.

It was not long, however, before their joy was dimmed as

they saw some of their British guardians begin to put stumbling blocks in their way. Even though the Arabs prospered when the Jews came to the land, hostile officials of the British Colonial office encouraged Arab hostility to the Jewish settlers. Jewish loyalty to the British and Allied cause during the war was forgotten by some English governments who revived the discredited foreign policy "*divide et impera*," "divide and rule." Divide the natives of a country and then step in as a good and kind judge to rule with an iron hand. Encourage the Arabs and Jews to fight with each other. Make them mutually suspicious, then a third party will have every excuse to continue to govern the land indefinitely. Then Britain can, in a fatherly way, make Palestine just another British colony, just another link in the life-line of Empire. Some British statesmen, in dealing with the Palestine situation, have had the knack of committing moral crimes while wearing the faces of saints. This reminds one of what the British statesman, Disraeli, once said in an argument in Parliament about Lord Gladstone, "If the Ace of Spades were to drop out of Gladstone's sleeve in a card game," commented Disraeli, "Gladstone would righteously pretend that the Lord Himself had placed the card there."

Let me make this clear, neighbor, because it is unjust to condemn the innocent. Not all British statesmen were guilty of this betrayal of the Jews. All the while honest men were rising in the Parliament to denounce their own government's policies in Palestine and to demand that Britain fulfill her pledge of honor to the Jewish people. One man who did this time and again, powerfully and eloquently, was none other than Winston Churchill. Lord Wedgewood and Lord Strabolgi were among numerous others. Influential sections of the British press and the rank and file of Englishmen have continued to hold as a sacred obligation and permanent

policy, the reestablishment of the Jewish National Home. Despite this, British cabinets and governments have more frequently than not, hindered by means devious and direct, the efforts of the Jews to make of Palestine a Jewish state. Periodically the Jews went before the League of Nations to demand that the League compel Britain to fulfill her obligations and promises, "to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine." The Jews complained Britain was restricting Jewish immigration. She stopped land sales to Jews. She did not provide adequate protection for Jews and at the same time would not let the Jews carry arms to protect themselves. Simply put, instead of facilitating, she was retarding the Jewish effort. Always the League listened, said that the Jews were right, told Britain her acts were illegal, and asked her to mend her ways. Every time the League said this, a cabinet member would explain in Parliament, "You see, Palestine is a rather difficult problem."

The final act of disillusionment to Jewish national hopes was the issuance by the Chamberlain government of the infamous "White Paper." The Jews of the world and the most enlightened Christians have ever since called it the "Black Paper." That sinful document was a virtual repudiation of the entire Balfour Declaration. The White Paper provided that after April 1, 1944, no more Jews could enter Palestine without Arab consent. Since the Arabs at that time outnumbered the Jews two to one, this meant that the Jews were to remain forever a hopeless minority in their own country. It meant that Palestine was not to be the Jewish homeland but only another British possession. That paper remained in effect and in full force. It made no difference that by April 1, 1944, a harassed and tormented Jewish people was trying to flee from every European country; that it had no place to go but home, to Palestine. The British government's reply

was, "Very sorry, but the Paper stands." A few thousand beaten Jews escaped from the hell of German concentration camps. They got into rickety old boats. Some went down to the bottom of the sea, smashed by the Germans. One boat-load reached the shores of Palestine, but the customs officials would not let the refugees off the boat. They stood on the decks and gazed at the land. The guards said, "Go back." "Where can we go," the Jews asked, "to the death Hitler has prepared for us?" The calm reply was, "Very sorry, but you cannot come in." One night the boat exploded in the harbor and its passengers were killed and drowned. The British did not blow up the ship. Jews did it themselves. They had nowhere to go. They preferred to die in waters that at least lapped the shore of the land they longed to embrace—their homeland. The British White Paper remained in force. In 1939, Winston Churchill denounced the White Paper. He was not then Prime Minister. Only one statesman had the courage in the midst of the war to repudiate the British White Paper. His name was Franklin D. Roosevelt. He openly stated the American government never agreed to the White Paper. The British government ignored this and the White Paper still stands.

In 1944 every section of American public opinion endorsed the Jewish claim to Palestine. Both presidential candidates in the United States stated they would do everything in their power to fulfill the Balfour Declaration and to establish "a free Jewish commonwealth" in Palestine. The Republican and Democratic parties put planks in their platforms supporting Jewish claims to a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine.

But there is still no Jewish state in Palestine.

The Jews are not giving up. They will never let the world's conscience rest until the biblical prophecy of the Re-

turn is fulfilled. The Jews believe that you, neighbor, and all good men (particularly all good Christians) who believe in the right of nations to self-determination, will help them demand that justice be done to the Jew. They think this matter cannot be delayed. These are the days when the fate of nations is being decided. The United Nations have agreed that Poland is to be a free country. France has already regained her freedom. Czechoslovakia has been reestablished. Italy, our erstwhile enemy, is again an independent nation. The Atlantic Charter has promised that every nation, no matter how small, is to have the right to independence. What justice is there then to the claim that the Jews ought to wait until peace is achieved before they bring up the Palestine question?

There are some who argue that if the United Nations promised a commonwealth to the Jews, the Arabs would become unfriendly to the United Nations' cause. If the allied nations no longer feared Germany, why did they fear the Arabs? Everyone knows that the Arab leaders of Palestine have from the outset been hostile to the United Nations. The dominant political leaders of the Arabs in Palestine conspired with Hitler and Mussolini. When war broke out they fled Palestine, running for safety to Rome and Berlin. When the British had their backs to the wall and called for recruits in Palestine, the Arabs were conspicuous by their insignificant numbers. The Jews *answered* the call. They died with the Tommys at Tobruk; they fought with Montgomery at Alamein. They volunteered for the most dangerous tasks, asking only for the privilege of meeting the Nazis face to face. Arab leaders made no secret of the fact that they would welcome a Nazi conquest of Palestine. They looked to the fulfillment of Mussolini's and Hitler's promises to them. Indeed, the British have no fear of the Arabs. Palestine is the

arsenal of British armed power in the Near East. The refusal to promise the Jews a commonwealth in Palestine is based simply on the cynical political maxim of divide and rule.

There has never yet been voiced any united Arab protest against Jewish hopes in Palestine. Arab opposition to Jewish Palestine comes only from rich Arab politicians and land-owners who still operate as feudal lords. They fear that Jewish development of the country will result in unrest among the masses of poor Arabs who will demand for themselves the same economic and educational opportunities enjoyed by Jewish labor in Palestine. These Arab plutocrats shrewdly understand that Jewish leadership in Palestine is interested in the welfare and advancement of the enslaved Arab masses. Zionists would not escape this responsibility, for Zionism is essentially a spiritual movement.

Further, the Jews of Palestine, given half a chance, are well able to preserve order and to defend themselves. But, neighbor, let me ask you this direct question: Suppose it *were* necessary for the United Nations to exercise their military might in Palestine in order to put down Arab disorder and to protect Jewish rights there? Hundreds of thousands of Jewish sons enrolled in the armies of the United Nations. Many of them died so that America and England and Poland and Czechoslovakia might be free. Would it then be too much to expect that these same armies should be ready to do the same for the Jewish people? In World War II a successful attempt has been made by the United Nations to impose by force decisions which it is hoped will secure peace for all mankind. Jews are part of mankind. They have been history's greatest victim of injustice. They were Hitler's first victims, and the last agonized groans of tortured Jews were the first alarm given to the rest of the world to prepare for Hitler's attacks upon

other innocent peoples. Why then should just men refrain from imposing by force, if need be, a just peace for the Jew in Palestine? Here is something to meditate on.

II

Possibly all this time you have been saying to yourself, "There is no doubt from what you say that the Jews want Palestine very much. But why? You have not answered that question yet. If the world becomes democratic, won't Jews be better off by remaining where they are instead of building up a tiny nation? By their insistent demands they are creating a problem. Why do they feel there is no future for the Jewish people without Palestine?"

First of all, we Jews want an opportunity to fulfill what we have always regarded as our destiny, to make our spiritual contribution to mankind as a Jewish people through an exemplary social, religious, economic, cultural life in the land of our origin. In Palestine in its youth as a nation, Israel discovered One God. Israel's prophets in the same land first proclaimed the universality of the One God. He was the God of the Ethiopians as well as of the Jews. In Palestine Israel's religious genius evolved the Bible. In Palestine the eternal cry of the human soul for social and economic justice, peace, the brotherhood of man—these were all produced by the union of our people's soul with the hills of Judea. We have been in exile as a nation these two thousand years. Our spirit and form have become weakened and diluted. A people needs a home base from which to replenish its spiritual supplies. We can regain our ebbing strength only where we can be a majority people. Everywhere else we are and will remain a minority.

Secondly, we Jews have the unquenchable desire to be a

brother nation to the rest of the world, not stepchildren. We do not want our fate to be decided for us by other nations as the destiny of orphans is determined by uncles and aunts. Rather, we want to sit in the family of nations as equals commanding their respect. When our brothers are mistreated or abused in other lands, we, the Jews of the world, want to hold the evil-doers to account through the Jewish government in Palestine. We are weary of going to friendly governments asking them to intercede in our behalf and then waiting until our friends decide whether the matter is grave enough for them to bother. We are sated with being discussed in every foreign ministry. We want to be there with the rest of you to speak for ourselves. It is our firm belief that you will treat a brother better than you do a stepchild; that the entire Jewish position will be more secure in every country when a Jewish nation in Palestine becomes a reality.

In the third place, we need Palestine desperately as a homeland to which the Jews of Europe can turn when they no longer wish to remain among the people who have persecuted and tormented them. That does not mean we expect all of the Jews of Europe to go to Palestine. We understand that if this is to be a decent civilized world, the Jew will have the right to live as a citizen in every country of the world. We know that if Poland, for example, should ever prove again to be worthy of her independence as a nation, then Jewish university students in Poland will have a seat in the classroom like other students and will not be compelled to stand throughout their classes, as they were until the time Poland was destroyed. We look forward to the time when the Jew will be able to live as a citizen in any country on the face of the earth, enjoying absolute equality of rights with every other citizen. Why should we not look forward to this? A Frenchman has the right to be a citizen of France or

to become an American or English or Chinese citizen. We do not maintain that every Frenchman must live in France or every German in Germany. This right of residence we expect justice will demand for the Jew, when Europe is re-organized.

But we know that there are many Jews who no longer wish to remain in the European countries. Europe has only sad memories for them. They have seen their fathers, mothers, and children tortured and murdered in almost every city and village of the old world. They painfully remember the persecution, the discrimination and starvation to which they were subjected for many long years before this war. They feel like strangers even in the countries in which they and their fathers were born. They want to go home. To the Jew, home means Palestine—not South Africa or Ethiopia or Alaska. *To the Jew, home means Palestine.* And we, the rest of the Jews of the world, want these, our brothers, to have the chance to go home where they will be unafraid.

Because you have a sense of American fairness, you probably subscribe to everything that has been said so far. But this question still remains in your mind. It is the first question that some non-Jews ask. Certain Jews ask it too. "How can a man be loyal to two countries? Why should Jewish citizens of America fight for a Jewish government in Palestine?" It is difficult indeed to understand why that question has plagued you for so long and why you ask it only of Jews. You might ask it about every other people in the world, yet you do not and never have. You address it only to the Jews. Consider the following facts carefully, then perhaps you will never put that question again: There are millions of Americans today who come of British ancestry. They are loyal, patriotic American citizens. Yet at the

same time they have a great love for England. They would, if need be, lay down their lives that England might forever remain free. At the beginning of the Second World War, several thousand American citizens left this country and voluntarily entered the British armies even before it was certain that America herself would ever be in the war. There are millions of American Irish who are patriotic Americans, yet no group has had a fiercer love for its ancestral home, Ireland. They are proud of their Irish ancestry and they want Ireland to be a free and independent nation. In exactly the same way, there are several million American Jews who are second to none in their loyalty to America, and at the same time want Palestine to be a free Jewish Commonwealth. Those Jews have not the slightest intention of giving up their American citizenship to go to Palestine, but they are determined that a Jewish nation be established there. The difference between the Jews and the other groups in America is that while the latter may be either Protestant or Catholic or Unitarian, virtually all Jews believe in the Jewish religion and officially adhere to only one religion. That is what makes the American Jew different from the American Irish, American Czechs, American Poles, etc. Surely you do not believe that because a Jew believes in the Jewish religion only, he thereby becomes any the less an American. Not only America, but every other nation has accepted the principle that a man's religion has nothing to do with his citizenship or his patriotism. So far as we Jews are concerned, there is a law in our Talmud which states, "Be loyal to the country where you live. In all civil matters the laws of the country take precedence over Jewish law." It is urgent that this question of double loyalty be cleared up once and for all so that you never again think it necessary to question my loyalty as an American citizen because I want the Jews

to establish their own government in their own homeland.

Do conflicts ever arise when a man has double loyalties? They may. And then a man must make his decision according to his conscience. America met the situation in World War II. Many German Americans were torn by conflicting loyalties. Most of them on moral grounds gave preference to their American loyalties and renounced Germany. Those who betrayed America were deported or arrested. But American Jews have no political loyalties to Palestine. Their relationship to that country is cultural and religious. Here no conflicts are possible.

We Jews cannot blame you alone for being confused on the question of loyalties. We know some of our brother Jews have unfortunately suffered from the same confusion. There are Jews in America, some of them prominent, who are more strongly opposed to the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine than are any Christians. They sincerely and deeply fear that with the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine our loyalty as citizens of other lands *will* be questioned. Our answer to them is exactly the same as it is to you, and they should be able to understand this surely as easily as you will understand it. They have been given the answer over and over again. Then why do they continue in their violent opposition? The sad truth is they have been taught to be afraid. They have learned that the world is not always fair and just to the Jew. Perhaps they have lost their faith in your sense of justice. Some of the Jews who are opposed to Jewish Palestine are people of substantial means. They would have an important economic stake endangered if their citizenship were ever questioned. What is more, others of them have lost all sense of attachment to the Jewish nation or the Jewish people. The latter would like to lose their identity as Jews and to become assimilated. They think

it is best if we Jews forget our past, forsake our future, commit suicide as a people, and bring an end to what they regard as only a painful history. The rest of us Jews pity these, our brothers. We know they are spiritually ill, just as any person who wants to commit suicide has lost his morale. The psychiatrist will tell you that a man, who is ready to destroy himself, has lost his self-confidence and his faith in other people. He is ashamed of himself and thinks life is not worth living. Fortunately, nine out of ten Jews are normal, healthy people and the Jewish nation as a whole is healthy. It still has the God-given desire to go on living as a people, to do its work in the world and to help others. A healthy nation never surrenders, but fights to live.

It is painful to say this about some of my own people, but I promised at the outset to be honest with you. Honesty compels the admission that some of my Jewish brothers are without faith in the Jewish people and in you. They do not represent the Jews of the world or the Jews of America, no matter how prominent they are or how influential. This is not opinion; it is fact. Every time the Jews of America have had a chance to vote on the Palestine question, they have voted overwhelmingly in favor of a Jewish commonwealth. The most recent election among the Jews of America was held in May, 1943. The Jews of every city elected delegates to the American Jewish Conference. All who voted knew in advance that the chief question to come before that Conference would be to determine whether the Jews of America wanted or did not want the Jewish commonwealth in Palestine. Of over five hundred delegates elected to the Conference, there were not ten who voted against the Commonwealth. That was the final verdict of American Jewry on the issue of Palestine. That verdict stands.

There are some Jews who oppose the creation of a political

Jewish state in Palestine, but favor the development of a spiritual and cultural center. They advance the view that Israel has ceased to be a nation today, is, and should remain only a religious community. Many of these non-Zionists are sincere even if unrealistic about the Jewish position in the world. They overlook or dismiss not only the urgent political and physical needs of a homeless nation, but they decline to recognize that Israel will not long remain a religious community if in every country it is a religious and cultural minority. Even a state of utopian cultural and religious tolerance will not prevent the operation of an inexorable law of social life—the unlike unhaltingly seeks assimilation with the like. That is no one's fault. It is a fact of life. By the same force of logic, unless politically the Jews enjoy majority status in Palestine—no spiritual or religious center will long flourish there. The facts and laws of social life apply there as everywhere.

In conclusion, neighbor, let me ask you these questions in the hope that you will answer them yourself. Do you believe in the validity of the Jew's claim to an opportunity to reconstruct his spirit and form in the land of his origin? Do you believe in what the Atlantic Charter states about the right of every nation, small as well as large, to self-determination and the fulfillment of its highest and noblest destiny? Do you believe in bringing an end to Jewish homelessness? Do you believe in giving the remnant of European Jews a chance to live where a warm welcome awaits them? Do you believe in prophetic justice, historic justice, Christian justice? If you do, then you must help the Jews to establish the Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine in order to make the Jewish people a free, proud, and independent nation there.

CONCLUSION

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

DEAR NEIGHBOR:

At last you have the whole story. You know who I am, where I come from, what I believe and how I live. You have all the facts on the way in which we Jews are organized in America and throughout the world. You have found out precisely what we think of Capitalism, Communism, and all the in-betweens. There has been no hesitancy in revealing why I want my son to be a doctor, or a lawyer, or anything he wants to be. You have been to my home. My attachment to Palestine has been explained in detail. The story is complete. The hope is that your knowing me has at last removed your unfounded fears and suspicions. The sole purpose of these one-way conversations was to have you understand your Jewish neighbors. Whether or not you like them is of little concern. Liking is a matter of individual temperament. You may not like your brother-in-law, or some other relative in your family, but if you want your family to live together in peace and harmony, you try to understand every member of it. As one American writer has put it, there is for each of us the "moral obligation to be intelligent."

You and I are part of the American family and the larger world family. Whether or not America has a peaceful future depends a great deal upon how you and I get along together. There will always be outsiders who will employ every device to set us against each other. Anti-Semitism is as old as it is evil.

It will thrive where ignorance and superstition survive. It will be employed wherever evil men conspire against the unity of nations. Hitler's removal does not prevent others from seeking to divide the American family by setting Christian against Jew. There is already ominous evidence that Hitler has his successors.

In the post-war period America faces serious problems. Millions of men will return from the battlefronts looking for jobs. It will take time before they find them. Factories that made tanks, shells, and machine guns must change to the production of the normal peacetime needs of the world: homes, pianos, washing machines, etc. The change will take time. Formerly there was a shortage of almost all kinds of goods; therefore prices were very high. Everyone made money. With the resumption of peacetime production, there may be an oversupply of civilian goods. Prices will drop. Formerly the professions were shorthanded. As the boys return, they will crowd back into their professions.

America has for the past decade and a half felt the trend of liberalism. The laboring man has greatly improved his lot. Social security has been established, at least in a measure. But progress is not uninterrupted. The pendulum will swing back and it would not be surprising if we have a period of reaction before we go forward again. There will be a host of problems, tensions and conflicts in the reconstruction period following the war. Opportunists will try to cash in on the dissatisfactions that are bound to come. They will fall back on the Jews as the cause of all the difficulties. They will tell you the Jews fomented the war, profited from it, and let gentiles make all the sacrifices. The Jews of America have prepared themselves for this charge. They have been writing the Jewish war record in black and white. They have tabulated the War Department figures. The record makes it

abundantly clear that Jews in America have given half a million sons, a larger number than was expected, considering the proportion of Jews to the rest of the population of the country. Colin Kelly was America's first war hero, and his bombardier was Meyer Levin of Brooklyn. For valor in action, Jewish soldiers have received their share of medals and more. Jewish chaplains have been killed in the war. But this record will not deter the opportunists. The truth is no stumbling block in their path. They deal in emotional prejudices, not in sober facts.

I have been worrying a great deal, neighbor, about your behavior during the critical post-war period. Are you going to remember what you have learned about me or will you quickly forget it and join the crowd that will try to make me the goat? If Coughlin and Gerald L. K. Smith blare away on the radio again and try to gain political power by telling you that the Jews brought about the war and the troubles following the war, will you believe that buncombe, or will you say, "That's been tried before and it is the mark of a demagogue?" Are you going to remember that my brother Jews, your neighbors, died in the war to keep America free for themselves and for you? Will you recognize the truth that among the unemployed there will be thousands of Jews as well as Christians? Will you be honest enough to recall that during the war, profit-making was not limited to any religious group, and that some of both faiths took advantage of the war? Are you going to remember that the largest number of Jews and Christians in America were patriotic, worked in defense industries, enrolled in civilian defense, bought bonds? Are you going to leave the Jewish angle out of your thinking when it comes to dealing with post-war problems in America?

Why do I raise these questions? Because history has taught

us that human beings have a great weakness for blaming their troubles on somebody else, usually on the one who can least defend himself. That is where we get the word, scapegoat. A scapegoat is not guilty, but innocent. He is made the goat for other people's mistakes.

As I said some time ago, the Jew has an abiding faith in your character and in your sense of justice. He is hoping that because you have listened patiently to his story, you have the information which will prevent your committing the moral crime of making him a scapegoat.

But assuming you will not touch anti-Semitism with a ten-foot pole, and that you harbor a neighborly good will toward him what more does he ask of you? Just this, to understand and sympathize with this platform of the American Jew:

I. I want to live as an American citizen free to enjoy the blessings of American democracy in equal measure with you. To engage in whatever business I choose, or whatever profession I like. To participate fully in all public affairs that interest me without feeling that you will resent me. To join any political party that suits me, to run for any political office for which I feel qualified, and to be judged on my merits alone. I want my sons and daughters to have the same freedom of opportunity as yours, to go to school, to do the things they like to do, to earn a living, to live wherever they please, and to enjoy your good will as a neighbor.

II. I want to remain a loyal Jew. To teach my children the classical Hebrew language of the Bible, the language that is spoken in Palestine today. I want the English language to be their primary language, but I also want my children to be the bearers of at least two cultures, just as I am and most Americans are. I want to maintain Jewish schools after public school hours. I may even find a need for some parochial schools to train future leaders of the Jewish people in Amer-

ica. I want to engage, without interference or suspicion, in rebuilding the Jewish national homeland in Palestine, and will expect you to understand that this in no way raises any question as to my American loyalties. I want to be a part of the world organization of Jews, to help my brother Jews in Europe or in any other place where they may need my help.

III. I want to be free to work for a better America. I want democracy to expand till it becomes the religion of American nationalism and until it permeates the atmosphere of every home, factory, schoolhouse and government office in this land.

The question of the hour is: Where do we go from here, neighbor? Take my hand, and together let us walk into the promising future which we shall build, a greater America that will be a light to the peoples of the earth. Let Jesus and Paul illumine *your* way; let Moses and Isaiah illumine *mine*. But let the road be the same; let us walk together.

Is the Jew a mystery to the Christian? Does he truly understand his Jewish neighbors? Rabbi Cohen feels that if this mystery were dispelled, if Christians understood Jews they could live together in mutual cooperation and harmony. So he sets out to explain the Jew to the Christian.

He begins with the history of the Jewish people and of their great leaders, Abraham, Joseph and Moses. He tells of the entry into the Promised Land and of the Dispersion.

Subsequent chapters discuss the beliefs of the Conservative, Orthodox and Reform Jews. An interesting chapter is devoted to the attitude of the Jews toward Christ. Then comes perhaps the most important part of the book—the charges brought against the Jews of being international plotters with secret organizations and an invisible government. After refuting these charges, Rabbi Cohen takes up racial discrimination against the Jews in America. Does a young Jewish citizen have the same opportunities as a Christian in the professions, socially, educationally? A strong case is made out for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, and the book closes with a vigorous plea for better understanding of the Jews here in the United States.

Rabbi Cohen writes with precision and clarity of statement. He has chosen a certain definite and very appealing line of approach, and he never deviates from it.

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